

Marshall Plan helped Europe to overcome have been succeeded by imbalances that are potentially just as obstinate and just as dangerous. The Americans do not save enough if they have to finance large budget deficits; the Japanese save too much if there is no American deficit for them to finance; the rest of the world is under threat as each of these giants seeks to find a remedy, the Americans by cutting imports, the Japanese by seeking alternative export markets. Who is likely to run a \$200 billion deficit once American comes back into balance or begins to repay debt? If the answer is nobody, how can countries like Germany and Japan continue in massive surplus?

Containing inflation is unemployment is reduced and output expands in take up the slack is a second, and may prove a more enduring, problem. It cannot be assumed that it can be solved consistently with unchanged living standards for those already in jobs, although in the past that may have been so. There are newcomers to be accommodated within and among national economies. There are also problems of coping with volatile financial markets that can dominate national governments at least as easily as can militant trade unions. Once the genie of inflation is out of the bottle it is not easy to put it back again.

What needs to be emphasized is not that employment is more important than price stability - most of us have no difficulty in accepting that - but that reductions in employment may have very little effect on wages and prices and may be ineffective as a weapon for combating inflation. There is, and has long been, a large element of indeterminacy in the movements of money wages from year to year and so long as that is so there will remain a cor-

respondingly large element of indeterminacy in the movement of prices.

While *Apocalypse 2000* looks back from next century, *Roosevelt's Children* has a different perspective. It starts from an earlier period of crisis, when a new world order was taking shape in the immediate aftermath of war and credits Roosevelt with having set his stamp on that new order although his contribution was largely confined to the establishment of the United Nations. It then presents the views of a number of leaders of the generation born during or shortly after the Second World War who inherited the new order and who in that sense are "Roosevelt's Children".

What this yields is a series of excerpts from interviews linked together by a narrative and commentary by the editor, Edward Mortimer, himself one of Roosevelt's children. This worked well on television and it was for television (Channel 4) that the interviews were originally commissioned. It is a good deal less satisfactory as a way of dissecting complex political and economic problems for the reader. It works better as a way of presenting current problems than as a way of explaining how the post-war world, in disorder as much as order, was created. For the one purpose it is helpful to be given a lively impression of the scope for debate and the conflict of views such as interviews can provide, whereas for the other what we need is coherent and consistent exposition by a good historian.

The whole set-up is a little artificial. The problems of the late 1980s do not seem to have much in common with those of the late 1940s, and neither set of problems has much to do with Roosevelt, who died before the war of 1939-45 was over. There are in fact two books

held together by the idea behind the title. In one we are asked to envisage the problems of founding a new world order after 1945 and reflect on the changes that have occurred since; and in the second we are looking at those changes and at the world of the 1980s through the eyes of forty-year-olds, all of them already influential figures.

The early sections of the book rely on the recollections of a dozen participants in the moulding of the post-war world, including Lord Franks, Lord Gladwyn, Alger Hiss and Eddie Bernstein - "Roosevelt's Midwives" as they are labelled. The passages quoted from interviews with these octogenarians are very much to the point and do serve to illuminate the history of the period. But they are little more than a background to the recollections of the forty members of the next generation and their comments on the way the world has developed during their lifetime.

They are an articulate group (most of them politicians) and can put an argument vividly and concisely. There is at least one ex-Prime Minister (Laurent Fabius) and one Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition (Neil Kinnock). Then there are comments from Japanese, Arab and African (Nigerian) and other figures whose views are interesting and not easily available elsewhere. Finally come the American, British, French and German contingents (no Italians). They look back on Suez and Kennedy and Vietnam and détente and all the other milestones in international relations. But most of the time what holds the stage is America and what is happening there. This is partly because the Americans take such a confident stance and continue to look on themselves as world leaders; but also because most of the

others have grown up in a world in which America was very much the dominant influence and they have to ask themselves what place that influence will have in future. The general impression, not surprisingly, is of a world movement of opinion to the right, to distrust of the State (which counted for so much in 1945) and trust in markets (which was then at a low ebb). It is left to Chris Patten, who makes some of the most perceptive comments in the book, to point to "a ludicrous overconfidence in market forces".

None of those interviewed hints at a world in such disarray as *Apocalypse 2000*. Perhaps they were encouraged, when asked to look back to the 1940s, to recall how threats of world disaster as grave as any we now face were overcome then with unexpected success. If so, they may have overlooked the most significant feature of the Marshall Plan which made that success possible: that the Plan was backed and financed by a single country which accepted a responsibility for bringing the world economy back into balance. Whether the world economy regains its balance by the 1990s depends once again largely on the United States. On this occasion there is no need for a Marshall Plan; things are now the other way round, with the United States the world's leading debtor instead of its leading creditor. But now, as in the post-war world, there is a need, if not to create a new international financial order, at least to strengthen what still remains.

The book is admirably edited and the narrative is judicious and thoughtful. For those who like their history in snatches and mixed with the reflections of the men of tomorrow and of yesterday, it makes excellent reading. But they would enjoy it better on television.

after the Big Bang, what will happen at the merchant banks? As these words are being written, one major firm has just ceased equity market making and there have been executive changes at the highest level in another, both cases - it appears - of bankers taking over from brokers. Will the greater financial strength being developed in London, designed to match that of a Lehman Brothers or a Salomon Brothers, lead to greater functional strength? Or is the scene being set for a repetition in London of the sordid events that led to Lehman's downfall? Anyone who has worked long in the City knows well that the nature, attitudes and interests of merchant banker, of stockbroker, of stockjobber, are, often, very different - that, after all, was why X became a banker, Y a broker and Z a jobber. In the United States, in houses such as Lehman Brothers or Goldman Sachs or Merrill Lynch, the three talents have for a long time cohabited under the same roof. Now we have learned from Mr Auletta's admirable book what, under certain circumstances, the results can be.

By contrast, the story R. Foster Winans has to tell in *Trading Secrets* is one of squalid deceit, often involving only smallish sums. But Winans is not only the author; he is also the sad protagonist in his own drama, perhaps achieving a kind of catharsis in the telling, as he awaits the final outcome. But this is to get ahead of the events - which are recounted at some length and in implausible chunks of recalled dialogue. The trouble began when Winans, a youngish and surprisingly inexperienced reporter on the *Wall Street Journal*, entrusted with co-writing an influential stock market column called "Hard on the Street", met a seemingly highly successful stockbroker called Peter Brant. Brant's career at Kidder Peabody and his extravagant lifestyle were running into difficulties at the time, as stocks that he had bought for himself and clients were proving they had the ability to fall as well as to rise. Winans, however, the relatively poorly paid reporter (never more than \$31,000 per annum), was not to know this; and he himself lacked the money to buy a small house in the country with his boy friend, David Carpenter. Poetic licence, *Avernus*!

Winans was persuaded to tell Brant in advance about the stocks that he would be recommending for sale or purchase in his column; especially the stocks of very small companies, which could be expected to react more vigorously than those

of a giant such as IBM or General Motors. Sometimes it worked, often it did not. Brant traded through the account of a colleague, Ken Felis, as well as through that of an alcoholic customer called David Clark. But his manoeuvres were so elephantine as to trigger the alarm bells of the American Stock Exchange's computer. Result: investigations rapidly discerned the correlation between Winans's recommendations and the dealings by a very small number of accounts - always the same ones - in the stocks recommended.

That, really, was the end. The Securities and Exchange Commission had little difficulty in extracting a full confession from Winans. The *Wall Street Journal* sacked the reporter and adopted an unattractively hollower-than-thou attitude. Former friends ratted on one another. Brant seems to have become, at times, suicidal. His career at Kidder Peabody having come to an abrupt end, he admitted to three federal crimes, but has yet to be sentenced. Clark "reportedly remains a target of criminal investigation". Felis, rather harshly, got six months' imprisonment, to be served at weekends. Carpenter was virtually let off, rightly. Winans faced the worst of the music and, in due course, was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment (his final appeal has yet to be heard). For all this, he received a pay-off which at \$30,000 or so was, like so much else of this story, hardly more than petty.

The book is not especially well written, and is needlessly padded out by unpleasant descriptions of the reactions of Winans and Carpenter when they realized the game was up. In his self-pity, Winans has few good words to say about other financial journalists who, whatever their failings, at least did not sell their souls for a mess of pottage - which itself inevitably went to feed the lawyers. Subsequent tales of insider dealing, both in the United States and Britain, have swamped Winans's misdeeds, in terms of dollars and notoriety. However, there is an important revelation in this book: which Winans is too self-absorbed to pick up. Even the *Wall Street Journal*, a newspaper of the highest reputation, widely read throughout the world's financial districts, was yet prepared to allow a young reporter, who by his own admission was not far from being a financial ignoramus, to be co-author of a highly influential stock market column - and did not even remove him when his frequent mistakes of fact (which Winans, to his credit, does not conceal) came to light.

Cautionary tales

David Pryce-Jones

EDWARD INGRAM (Editor)
National and International Politics in the
Middle East: Essays in honour of Elie
Kedourie
284pp. Cass. £25.
07146 32783

Few writers, let alone academics, change the climate of opinion. Elie Kedourie is one who has done so. For thirty years he has been holding up to public scrutiny what may be called the colonialist period, in which the British acquired responsibilities towards other peoples, notably the Arabs. How these responsibilities were discharged is Professor Kedourie's great and abiding theme. Scrupulously he has examined previously uncharted depths in which one culture misconceives another, where illusion and guilt spawn, and the best intentions may therefore produce the worst results. Thanks to him, it is no longer possible to believe that colonialism is a *chose jugée*, or in other words that British colonial policy achieved a happy ending in handing over whole peoples to self-declared nationalists among them.

If he were a polemicist, he might be thought to be fretting over diplomats too swollen-headed or prejudiced to consider sober evidence, and radicals remaking the world in the vain image of their egos; all of whom, losing the power to hurt, become so many illustrious clowns. Instead he is at all times a humorist. His gaze is fixed in pity and horror upon the corpses of the innocent dead, who paid with their lives for the folly and pretensions of their prodded lords and masters, whether once British or now Arab. Unfashionably in this age, he has never found an end which justifies cruelty and bloodshed as means to achieve it.

In honour of Kedourie's sixtieth birthday, Edward Ingram has edited this festschrift. "Cautionary tales" is an apt phrase he applies to Kedourie's essays; the civilizing influence has spread to the contributors, themselves all academics. Ingram vividly uses the curious murder of an Iranian envoy in India in 1802, and British handling of the incident, to illustrate the well-founded Kedourie argument that if right can be seen to be right, appeasement only induces the wrong it is supposed to avoid. Masdon C. Kent describes how the British after the First World War excluded the Italians from

a share in oil concessions as part of the spoils, a dubious policy of might being right. Bernard Lewis elegantly reviews Muslim perceptions of the West, from initial confidence, leading to imitation, ending in distress. Westernization of Ottoman bureaucracy is Roderic H. Davison's subject. Three essays are devoted to the period of the Sharifian revolt. William L. Cleveland shows how the Ottomans and the Sharifians both claimed to be defenders of the true Islam, each accusing the other of selling out to unbelievers, in one case German, in the other British. A truly Kedourian portrait of British bureaucratic muddle during the First World War is given by John S. Galbraith and Robert A. Huttenback. Joseph Kostiner describes how the British subsidies to the Sherif Hussein and his family were used to mobilize a tribal confederacy, and nothing more.

Studies follow of the World Party (by James Jankowski) and its reluctance to take up issues not directly Egyptian; and of Saudi Arabian education (by Mordecai Ahari). Francis R. Nicosia has written a succinct account of Fritz Grobba, in Hitler's day the most influential German in the Middle East. Rudolph Peters summarizes the Islamic movements and their purposes in contemporary Egypt. Convincingly, Mary C. Wilson puts forward the proposition that the incorporation of Palestinian land and people into Jordan in 1948 brought that rather artificial state into the international arena, and proved to be the factor ensuring the otherwise unlikely survival of its ruling dynasty. In perhaps his most celebrated essay, "The Chatham House Version", Kedourie once and for all exposed and demolished the view of Arab-British relations expounded by A. J. Toynbee and others, whereby the British were all wrong and must make the fullest possible amends to wholly right and righteous Arabs. Using unpublished material from Toynbee's papers, Gordon Martel reveals the man's altogether unbalancing sense of self-importance.

Progress is not the simple thing once imagined. The Arab nationalist world has proved much more brutal than the colonialist world which brought it into being. Offering insights into how this came to happen, a collection like this is valuable; only a short generation ago, it would have seemed almost inconceivable. It is the measure of Kedourie's originality and success that Middle East politics and history can now be discussed in the light of reality, however bitter.

Rocking the ark

Bernard Wasserstein

CLIVE SINCLAIR
Diaspora Blues: A view of Israel
215pp. Heinemann. £11.95.
0434 70315X

Clive Sinclair calls *Diaspora Blues: A view of Israel* a "companion volume" to his novel, *Blood Libels* (reviewed in the TLS of September 13, 1985), which engages similar issues. Here he explores the tangled, ambivalent relationship between liberal Jewish intellectuals in the diaspora and the State of Israel, if often in rather self-indulgent fashion. Rather than sustained argument, he offers us a lucky dip of autobiographical musings, bookish ruminations, often quite funny anecdotes, transcripts of interviews with Israeli intellectuals, and a bestiary of zoological images. The picture on the jacket, Yosi Bergner's "Ship of Fools", was chosen by Sinclair to point to a central theme of the book: it depicts a Noah's ark of crocodiles, donkeys and other unidentifiable but unattractive fauna; with a winged creature (angel? dragonfly?) hovering Chagall-style above the prow. Is the vessel, as Sinclair suggests, the "Good Ship Israel", beset by dissension among the crew and threatened by pirates? Or are the creatures aboard the ark the Jews of the diaspora being ushered by an Israeli dove to the safety of dry land? No doubt the ambiguity is deliberate - and it is certainly thought-provoking.

Sinclair writes arrestingly, and grapples with some difficult questions. What about Jews in the diaspora feel, let alone do, about Israeli politics? How should liberal Zionists outside

Israel relate to their peers in the Peace Now movement? Does the intellectual have a particular role or responsibility in these matters? Sinclair is well equipped to tackle these problems. As literary editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, it is his thankless job to mediate between a still surprisingly effervescent Anglo-Jewish cultural world (for evidence see the lively pages of the *Jewish Quarterly*) and a depressingly philistine Jewish communal establishment. The current intellectual climate in England (different in this regard from the United States) is an increasingly uncomfortable one for people like Sinclair. *Bien-pensant* anti-Zionism (as expressed, for example, in recent issues of the *London Review of Books*) has attained such general acceptability that gutter-language passes for legitimate argument, while the slightest objection misses howls about alleged Jewish interference with freedom of expression.

There is still a case to be made for the non-colonial, non-aggressive, humanistic (and liberal) Zionism of his history the majoritarian through most of its history the majoritarian strain in Zionism to which Sinclair evidently clings. The problem with this book is that Sinclair does not quite succeed in lending his Noachian menagerie to dry land. Ambivalence may be the inevitable condition of the marginal Jewish intellectual, and in a Kafka it can even prove maddening; here the result is more like muddle. The admirable intention seems to be to provoke and challenge the received wisdoms of the lumpen-intelligentsia of the London "mad" sub-culture, but Sinclair's essays, while always readable, seem too often unfocused and inconclusive. In the end the reader is left unsure, sometimes even amazed, but not much more enlightened.

Right on both sides

C. M. Woodhouse

ROBIN HUGHAM
Diary of a Disaster: British aid to Greece, 1940-1941
269pp. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press. £24.50.
08131 15647
EVANGELOS AVEROFF-TOSSIZZAS
Lost Opportunities: The Cyprus question, 1950-1963
440pp. Aristide D. Caratzas, PO Box 210, 481 Main Street, New Rochelle, NY 10802. \$30.
0892413871
JOHN REDDAWAY
Burdened with Cyprus: The British connection, 1937pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £14.95.
0297 791206

The "special relationship" between Britain and Greece has been subjected to many stresses in the past half century: the affair of the Elgin Marbles is only the latest symptom. The titles of these three books diagnose much more serious cases: the "disaster" of the campaign of 1941; and the "lost opportunities" and the "burden" of the Cyprus Question from 1950. Their diagnoses are not fair; yet somehow the "special relationship" continues through thick and thin.

Robin Hugham, an American historian, argues that the British expeditionary force to Greece (in fact, chiefly Anzac and Polish) was doomed from the start. One group of planners at GHQ Middle East was already preparing its evacuation while another group was still busy sending it there. Why then was it ever sent? Churchill and Eden had two motives: a political anxiety to fulfil the guarantee given to Greece in 1939, and a military hope that a foothold could be regained in Europe. But why did Wavell, the Commander-in-Chief, support the military delusion? The answer emerges from a detailed examination, in diary form, of what was said and done over six months in London, Athens, Cairo, Ankara, Belgrade, Sydney and Wellington. Professor Hugham concludes that Wavell, a "master of deception", was really deceiving his superiors, uneducated as they were in modern warfare. If the Germans had invaded Greece, as he expected, in early March, 1941, instead of a month later, the expeditionary force would have been landed before it would have had to be evacuated. Thus political honour would have been satisfied at minimal military cost.

This is not to deny the contribution of sheer confusion and mismanagement, which are well illustrated by Hugham's impressionistic style. He gives a convincing account of the misunderstandings over the formation of the so-called "Alakmon Line", for which he rightly blames Eden and the British generals, though he is perhaps over-generous in acquitting General Papagos, the Greek Commander-in-Chief, of all error. There is something symbolic about the picture of Wavell, at the height of the crisis, sitting in the British embassy reading *Alice in Wonderland*.

Ten years later Britain and Greece were involved in another disaster which was more avoidable. Both the Greek ex-Minister, Evangelos Averoff, and the British ex-Administrator, John Reddaway, were participants in the history of the Cyprus Question. Each presents a skilful and persuasive account of his notional point of view. There seems to be no way of deciding between them except by the toss of a coin. But history, instead, imposed a forcible judgment of Solomon - partition.

Fortuitously published at the same time, the two books supplement each other and should be read together. Between them, they greatly enlarge the scope for serious discussion, particularly as each of them is based on copious new documentation. But they cannot be regarded as thesis and antithesis, because they rarely meet head-on, and no synthesis can be elicited from them, even when they seem to be discussing the same point. Both writers, for example, carefully analyse the crucial article in the Treaty of Guarantee (1960), which defined the responsibilities of the three guaranteeing powers if the constitutional settlement of Cyprus broke down. Britain, Greece and Turkey would first "consult together", and if they could not agree what to do, then each reserved the right "to take action with the sole aim of

re-establishing the state of affairs created by the present Treaty". Averoff's analysis is confined to arguing that this did not entitle the Turks to invade the island in 1974. Reddaway's analysis is confined to the right of the British, having duly "consulted" without success, to do nothing more. In legal terms, both are probably right. But in that case, why was the treaty called a "Treaty of Guarantee"?

The fact that the arguments of the two sides can neither refute each other nor be reconciled suggests that the quest for a solution in Cyprus was just as fated to disaster as the Greek campaign of 1941. So it seemed as long ago as 1950, when the Greeks would accept no solution which excluded *enosis* (union with Greece) and the Turks would accept none which did not exclude it. At that date, Averoff could argue that the Turks had no legal standing in the matter anyway; but Reddaway could have argued that the Greeks had none either. Both were right, until the issue was foolishly brought before the United Nations.

Where the two authors come nearest to agreement is in a grudging admiration of the skill and stubbornness with which the Turks established their *locus standi* in the affair. At first they relied on the British to make their case for them, but once the British showed signs of weakening under Greek pressure, they took matters vigorously into their own hands. Here again the rule of Eden was crucial. Reddaway quotes him saying that *enosis* was ruled out by the need to understand and accept the Turkish position. Averoff quotes his painful interview in 1953 with Papagos (by then Prime Minister of Greece), at which Eden refused to acknowledge the existence of a Cyprus Question. But after Eden left the scene, the Turks saw that they would have to look after their own interests. That they would do so with such effect must have seemed very improbable in 1950. How it happened is the theme of Averoff's catalogue of "lost opportunities". The British, as Reddaway's title hints, became sick of being "burdened with Cyprus". No one but the Turks can be at all proud of the outcome.

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PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1 Gower Street, London WC1E 6HA

Professional antipathies

Simon Lee

CLIVE UNSWORTH
The Politics of Mental Health Legislation
374pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £35.
0198255128

Ignorance leads to fear which leads to antipathy. This has been the pattern of discrimination against many minorities and it certainly applies to the history of society's reaction to the mentally ill. This least glamorous of disadvantaged groups none the less has its champions, who include, among others, both psychiatrists and lawyers. Yet these helpers have themselves been ignorant of each other's discipline, which has in turn led to fear and not only antipathy between them. They have viewed each other as rivals rather than as colleagues. As Clive Unsworth observes, "the legal position is hostile to attack from the medical perspective for insensitively subjecting the insane to procedural ordeals designed for the sane, and medical from the legal for presumptuously imposing its ministrations upon the resistant". Unsworth sets out to trace the history of mental health legislation in Britain over the past hundred years. He succeeds in charting the rise, fall and resurrection of "legalism" as regards the protection of the mentally ill and in explaining this in terms of changes in the wider political and intellectual climate.

There are many strengths but perhaps two weaknesses in his book. First, the fact that the mentally ill themselves never really feature at all in Unsworth's study detracts from the analysis. Since their lives under the varying legal and medical regimes are not adequately reported, the reader has no basis upon which to evaluate the competing philosophies. Second, the story of how the most recent legislation, the Mental Health (Amendment) Act 1982 and the Mental Health Act 1983, arrived on the statute book is not covered in sufficient depth. The reason for this is that Unsworth's ambitions, multi-layered study has its origins in a doctoral thesis started in the 1970s when the author wisely anticipated that legislative changes were on the way.

We must therefore await Larry Gostin's memoirs for the inside story of the politics of mental health legislation in the 1980s. Gostin is the American civil liberties lawyer who became the legal director of MIND, the pressure group which works for the mentally ill. He orchestrated MIND's campaign to change the law, organizing legal representation for the mentally ill and initiating test cases which culminated in victory in Strasbourg at the European Court of Human Rights. This in turn spurred the British government into implementing proposals which already owed much to Gostin's influence and MIND ensured that the legislation received cross-party support. A book could and should be written on the detail of such successful politicking for a good cause. How exactly did MIND lobby MPs, Ministers and civil servants? How influential was its recourse to the European Convention on Human Rights? Why did Gostin succeed at MIND but fail when he attempted similarly to mobilize cross-party support at the National Council for Civil Liberties?

But the strength of Unsworth's book lies in a different focus. He illuminates our understanding of law, showing us how it looks to unbelievers (medics) as well as to the faithful (lawyers). He dubs law at its best the new legalism and law at its worst the old legalism. While lawyers think of legalism as the ideology of enlightenment, in use Gostin's felicitous phrase, and lawyers view legalism in the context of the mentally ill as "piling safeguard upon safeguard, to protect the sane against illegal detention, delaying certification and treatment until the person genuinely in need of care was obviously (and probably incurably) insane". Unsworth explores this curious contrast between law's reputation as a mechanism for supplying liberty with some degree of concrete definition and its reputation for conservatism, elitism, archaism and mystification.

Moreover, he places law's fluctuating reputation within the broader perspective of changing political ideology. Thus the liberalizing legislation (and the reason why Gostin was perhaps pushing against an opening door) can

be explained by the emphasis on liberty in the politics of the 1980s: "The parallel revival of liberalism in the two major parties has enabled a new consensus on the direction of mental health legislation to be built around the new legalism". On the right, the case can be put in terms of legal safeguards acting as "a detraction from the power of welfare state professionals in favour of the liberty of the individual", on the left as "shoring up the position of a particularly helpless and neglected section of the oppressed. MIND skilfully maintained this political ambiguity and support for the rights campaign was forthcoming from across the political spectrum, including Harvey Proctor on the right of the Conservative Party and Michael Meacher on the left of the Labour Party."

Law and medicine have a common interest in a number of dilemmas currently awaiting government attention, such as the rights of the mentally handicapped, who are not to be confused with the mentally ill. The recent publicity on sterilizing and aborting the mentally handicapped suggests that legislation will have to be evaluated and perhaps utilized in this context. So we need lawyers and medics to understand each other's perspective. Unsworth has given us a lead in explaining both the acceptable and the unacceptable faces of legalism. We need also to know why some campaigns for reform of our civil liberties succeed and some fail, why some capture the spirit of the times or even change the spirit, while others flounder.

Clive Unsworth is too pessimistic in concluding that "The study of the past teaches us that it is difficult to predict the future of mental health legislation." On the contrary, his own study of the past provides us with insights which must help us to build a better future.

Cause for suspicion

David Pannick

PATRICK SCRATON and KATHRYN CHADWICK
In the Arms of the Law: Coroners' inquests and deaths in custody
192pp. Pluto. Paperback, £4.95.
0745302440

As anyone with experience of litigating fatal accidents claims will confirm, British law is not at its best in dealing with death. The jurisdiction of the coroner further demonstrates legal unease at providing comfort to the bereaved. The law is intelligent enough to know that something has to be done to investigate the death of a person in unusual circumstances, but is sufficiently human to find difficulty in knowing what to say and how to say it on such an occasion.

The duties of the coroner include the holding of inquests, in particular when he is informed that the dead body of a person is within his jurisdiction, and there is reasonable cause to suspect that the person has died a violent or unnatural death, or a sudden death for which the cause is unknown, or has died in prison. Contrary to popular misconception, the coroner's court does not determine legal liability, civil or criminal, for the death. Its role is to find the facts. This is an important function, not least because the inquest often provides the only opportunity for the family and friends of the deceased to find out how and why the death occurred.

Phil Scraton and Kathryn Chadwick "are not presenting a definitive account of coronership". They have three main concerns. First, to explain the legal inadequacy of the procedure adopted in the coroner's court. Second, to suggest necessary reforms. Third, to make political points about the nature and scope of the jurisdiction of the coroner. In particular its implications for deaths in custody.

It is impossible to reconcile the coroner's court with any conception of natural justice to the representatives of the deceased. The coroner selects the evidence which he considers to be relevant and decides who should be called as a witness. Although the interested parties can cross-examine the coroner's witnesses after he has taken them through their evidence, those parties have no right to make a speech summarizing the evidence before the coroner (nor the jury) considers the verdict.

Reforming zeals

Tom Campbell

VICTOR BAILEY
Delinquency and Citizenship: Reclaiming the young offender, 1914-1948
352pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £30.
0198266640

Twentieth-century transformations in the treatment of juvenile offenders in Britain have been striking in their range and extent. From the Children Act (1908) which introduced Juvenile Courts to England and Wales for all children under sixteen, to the Criminal Justice Act (1948) which abolished corporal punishment, and the Children and Young Persons Act (1969) which sought to extend the welfare approach to juvenile offenders, the movement has been, in fits and starts, towards specialist treatment based on individually assessed needs. This book takes up the story with the emergence of Juvenile Courts and the probation service after the Liberal victory of 1906 and enmeshes with the measures taken to find alternatives to prison in dealing with the rapid rise in delinquency during the Second World War.

The thesis of the book is that the inter-war developments in social policy with respect to juvenile offenders are to be seen as part of the general emergence of the Welfare State, and that the ideological origins of welfare provisions are an embodiment of the philosophy of progressive liberal reformers rather than the enforcement of social control by a conspiratorial ruling elite. What emerges is a detailed and complex account of the proposals and arguments deployed in the formulation of policy within the Home Office Children's Branch and

There is no legal aid to pay for legal representation in this context. At all stages of the procedure, the coroner possesses and exercises a broad range of discretionary powers. The recommendations of independent Committees as to necessary reforms to this patently unfair process have been largely ignored.

The coroner's court needs to be transformed into a more open public inquiry in which interested parties are eligible for legal aid, are provided with access to all documentary evidence, are able to call their witnesses and are given the opportunity to make a closing speech. In particularly complex or sensitive cases, a High Court judge should have jurisdiction over the inquest.

All of this is well argued by the authors. More controversial are the political implications they derive from the law relating to coroners. "The recent series of suspicious deaths, either in custody or involving the police, has", they suggest by reference to the cases of Jimmy Kelly, Blair Peach and Liddle Towers, among others, "placed the role and function of coroners high on the civil rights agenda." Scraton and Chadwick are concerned that there is a "special relationship" between the coroner and the local police, "raising the possibility of bias". Moreover, the way in which the coroner exercises his powers is of increasing importance, they contend, because "the growing use of excessive force by the police... [and] the shift towards the militarization of the police" are likely to lead to "an increase in controversial deaths involving the police".

This is an uneven book. There is almost nothing about the important powers of the Divisional Court to grant judicial review of irrational, illegal or procedurally unfair decisions by coroners. The polemical chapter on the deaths of women in custody ("all women are potentially in danger in prison given the stress and tension placed on them as criminal women by the policies and practices adopted in women's prisons") might have had more relevance in another work. Too many of the political propositions are asserted as self-evident truths which do not need the support of evidence or rational argument. But none of that can disguise the fact that, for the reasons given by the authors, we should take the necessary steps to bring the life of the existing coroner's court peacefully to a close. Few will mourn its passing.

the Prison Commission, and the ideas and influence of voluntary organizations, such as the Howard League for Penal Reform and the staffs of the courts and services involved.

Interesting and informative as Victor Bailey's account undoubtedly is, it hardly begins to deal with the general contention that the adoption, pace and evaluation of reforms depended crucially on the political elite's perception of the need for effective social control and the propagation of a disciplined workforce. However, whatever ideological interpretations are placed on the material presented, there is here a mine of fascinating insights into the mentality of the penal reformers which more than justifies the claim that they were, on the whole, humane and progressive people, and that some of those involved in the practical implementation of the policies were visionaries with great moral and religious commitment to their self-appointed task of reclaiming the young offender.

Central to much of the book is the history of the development of Borstal institutions from the harsh and penal régime developed under E. Ruggles-Brice, Chairman of the Prison Commission from 1895 to 1921, to the model of the working lads' version of the English public school pioneered under the inspirational leadership of Alec Paterson. Paterson sought to remove "the causes which turn lusty boys into weaklings, and sap the country of hardy rank and file" by removing them from their inadequate homes to a caring environment which would impart, by example and education, the skills, aspirations and self-discipline which would fit the boys for useful occupations. Like other reformers of the time, Paterson combined the evangelical enthusiasm which gave rise to the planning of University Settlements "across the bridges", with a positivistic theory of crime according to which the "causes" of crime are environmental factors such as unemployment, poverty and the disruption of family life, rather than the moral weaknesses of individual boys. The high point of this approach was the development of the "open" Bostals in which such remarkable figures as the Eton and Oxford-educated army officer, Bill Llewellyn, practised his Christian faith by sharing the hardships of the rigorous outdoor life endured by the Borstal boys at Lowdam village, North Sea Camp and Usk. Clearly a system which owed its success to such individual commitment could not always live up to its ideals, something which Paterson failed to appreciate when he fought for extending the role of long-term institutional care in Bostals rather than shorter periods of detention in more penal establishments. Also well documented are the powerful contributions of such people as Margery Fry of the Howard League, whose advocacy, in the 1920s, of a balanced consideration of the needs and the rights of delinquent children has an impressively modern ring, and Geraldine Cadbury, whose work in the Birmingham juvenile court in the same period established an individualized treatment approach for others to follow.

Badley has done as a service in documenting the principled and scientific position from which the advocates of reform in juvenile justice worked between the wars. Since then we have made few theoretical advances and lost something of the missionary optimism of such early reformers, although we have witnessed the remarkable development of the welfare-oriented Children's Hearing system north of the border following the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

Parhays because of the nature of its meticulously researched sources and its concentration on Home Office committees and government papers and reports, *Delinquency and Citizenship* has something of the less than fully critical flavour of an official history. More emphasis on the experiences of juvenile offenders, including those of Borstal boys and girls, and the reality of the conditions under which young people in trouble were held in prison on remand and subjected to humiliating and barbaric physical and emotional stresses in other ostensibly more benign institutions, might have presented a less sanguine picture.

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A kind of innocence

Frank Tuohy

DONALD RICHIE
The Inland Sea
488pp. Century. Paperback, £4.95.
0712695753

Donald Richie's *The Inland Sea* first came out in Japan and America over a dozen years ago. It is a highly individual account by a writer known best for his pioneering studies of the Japanese cinema, notably his books on Ozu and Kurosawa. The "inland sea" of the title is the body of water that lies between three of Japan's four big islands, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. It contains an enormous number of smaller islands, some mere rocks decorated with picturesquely twisted pine-trees, others supporting agricultural and fishing communities. For the Japanese, the area is celebrated as the scene of half-legendary wars between Heike and Genji warrior clans. For Westerners, only one place-name will be familiar: Hiroshima.

The Inland Sea would not do as a guide-book today. Too much has changed since Richie made his first trip in the early 1960s: there is pollution, there is even a bridge to Shikoku, most secret of the large islands. But his speciality is in human relationships. Modern Japan is difficult to get into focus. Random statistics fail to communicate; does an extra twenty years of life for the old (the expectation for women is over eighty years) or an extra ten inches of stature for the young (according to the Ministry of Education) indicate a change in human nature? It seems unlikely.

Richie's observations seem just as true now

as when they were first made: "I asked the girl if the shrine was old. Oh, that she didn't know. . . . It is considered seemly for a young girl to know nothing at all." Later, "the women can't think of anything to say. Talking to men, that is the role of the geisha, the bar hostess. It is not the role of well brought-up Japanese women." And, magisterially,

the Japanese always think us younger than we are. That is because they are all so young . . . they have no conscience, maybe, there is no cynicism and no corollary of disillusion. Appearances are reality, the mask is literally the face, and the cynic can find no tell-tale gap because none exists. The result is a kind of innocence, in our eyes at any rate.

A kind of innocence - that is the theme of *The Inland Sea*. Like the rest of us, this observer is intensely conscious of his difference from those about him, of the fact that he is always under scrutiny. All the more because his hook is also an investigation into his own sexual identity. Here is no "gentleman in the parlour" but someone who tells us that "part of my quest is devoted to seducing the natives . . . I want to take without hurting, I tell myself. This is not, however, true. I want to be given." But his fantasies include "torn schoolgirl uniform, thighs in modesty up in the air, cries for mercy etc". Humbert Humbert goes to Japan?

Hardly, because most of Richie's encounters turn out to be hilariously off-beat. There is the bar girl who identifies with, of all people, Elizabeth Barrett Browning - who was, in her eyes, a suffering geisha-like figure, endlessly the victim of men. There is the boy Saburo, who requires detailed descriptions of female genitalia, of which he has an imprecise conception. Such confidence and such outbursts of candour are a common aspect of encounters

Eating bitterness

Della Davin

MARK SALZMAN
Iron and Silk: Encounters with martial artists, bureaucrats and other citizens of contemporary China
212pp. Hamish Hamilton. £10.95.
0241120802

Travelling on an overcrowded local train in China, Mark Salzman is puzzled that the men squatting opposite seem unimpressed by him. He has been in China long enough to develop some defences and when he takes a train he usually prefers not to reveal that he speaks Chinese. He has grown tired of answering the endless friendly questions about nationality, height, wage and salary commonly addressed to stray foreigners. But this time it is Salzman who becomes curious about the two men who have so much on their minds that he does not interest them. In answer to his questions, they explain that they have just been released from a corrective labour camp where they had been

confined after stabbing someone during a game of poker. They seem impatient and restless telling their story. Then one of them begins a maudlin, drunken speech about his mother and how much he is looking forward to seeing her again. In a fury, his companion strikes him hard and orders him to stop, pointing to Salzman, and saying, "He's from far away. He can't see his mom at all. He doesn't need to know how happy you are."

Unexpected sensitivity in a tough former prisoner; this contrast between the iron and the silk finds echoes throughout Salzman's book. He had read Chinese at Yale, but it was need for a job rather than a desire to visit China which took him to Changsha, the capital of Hunan province, as an English teacher. Once there he made good use of his time, improving his Chinese, learning calligraphy, and most important of all to him, studying under various soft schools of martial arts under various teachers including the great Pan Qingfu whose nickname is Iron Fist. The master-apprentice relationship between Salzman and Pan Qingfu is at the centre of *Iron and Silk*. In martial arts,

the great virtues are control, self-discipline and hard work. The terminology is oddly reminiscent of Mao's China and indeed of its Confucian past, but the ideals are different. Communists undertook to "eat bitterness" or to suffer, in order to bring about a new society. In the world of martial arts, sacrifices and suffering are accepted so that the individual may excel and may achieve ever-greater feats. Pan accepts Salzman as a pupil because the American undertakes to "eat bitterness", or endure pain in his training.

Those with little interest in this self-cultivation may prefer the softer face of the book. Salzman excels in the spare narration of episodes which are simple but telling. He offers perceptive little sketches of his students, one so shy that she sat through classes with her head buried in her hands, and of the friends he made, among them a family of fishermen who offered to provide him with a boat to live on if he would stay with them. Since Westerners generally find much to amuse them in the strange ways of the Chinese, it is good to hear a joke made by a Chinese at our expense. When

Salzman asked his calligraphy teacher if it was true that mandarin ducks remained faithful to their chosen mates for a lifetime, he was told, "Yes, but I've heard that if you take them to America, they ask for a divorce within a few months."

Even Salzman's farewell to China involved an encounter with contrasting extremes of official obsequy and kindness. Railway inspectors tried to stop him boarding the train for Hong Kong with five swords, four sabres, a staff, a halberd, two hooked swords, some knives and a nine-section whip in his luggage. (He did have the requisite papers for them.) As he paced the station platform wondering what to do, he bumped into a policeman whom he had met a year before. The policeman returned with him to the officials and talked to them diplomatically for over an hour. Eventually Salzman gave them a demonstration of martial arts provoking such chaos that the officials gladly hid themselves of him and his weaponry. The good-natured policeman helped him carry his bags on to the train and sat with him until it pulled out of the station.

Festival at Kailas and Lake Manasarovar does demonstrate the author's ability to analyse the remnants of Buddhist culture and to give a colourful description of the religious aspects of Tibetan life in areas where the Chinese presence is relatively unobtrusive.

Somerville-Large and his companion took the route via Takikot to the Nepalese border post of Yuli and from there descended into the valley of the Humla Karnali, which I remember as one of the most magnificent forest sceneries in the whole of Nepal. It would be unfair not to mention Caroline Blunden's excellent photographs; one only regrets that they are not in colour.

Delhi and Agra, a Traveller's Companion selected and introduced by Michael Alexander (287pp. Constable. £12.95. 0 09 466550 8) is primarily a topographical anthology with quotations from diaries, memoirs and commentaries from travellers and inhabitants of the areas covered; included is Tamerlane's own account of the sack of Delhi in 1398, a witness descriptions of elephant fights, state and nautch dancing as well as reports from both sides during the Indian Mutiny.



Baron von Sillfried's photograph entitled "Tolence" is reproduced from *Once Upon a Time: Visions of old Japan*, with photographs by Felice Beato and Baron Raimund von Sillfried and the words of Pierre Loti, translated by Liukla Coverdale (112pp. Oxford: Phoenix. £27.50. 0 91 941907 5).

A woman's march

Hilary Spurling

ETHEL SMYTH
The Memoirs of Ethel Smyth
Edited by Ronald Crichton
393pp. Viking. £16.95.
01670 806552

Ethel Smyth describes herself, as a ribald small girl, bursting into the drawing-room to find that her eldest sister had fainted after a proposal, and was being revived with smelling salts by their mother. This sister, born in the middle of the nineteenth century, felt herself still part of the world of Jane Austen. Ethel, who prided herself on belonging to a younger, sterner and more cynical generation, never forgot the spectacle (or allowed her sister to forget it for that matter), remaining by all accounts in the end of her days at heart a kind of Just William.

Her attitude to women was gruff, bluff and chivalrous. She herself preferred temperance on an altogether more heroic scale, relating with admiration the exploit of another sister Violet — "she was more emphatically feminine, I think, than any of my sisters" — who saw a bulldog fasten its teeth in another dog's throat and succeed, where strong men failed, in prising its jaws apart by biting the bulking till it bled. Violence — "one of the most attractive, the most lovable symptoms of intense vitality" — was the quality Ethel prized most highly in her friends. She was no slouch in that line herself, but reckoned to have met her match in the Empress Eugénie ("I think none can ever have had greater natural violence of temper than the Empress"), who once lashed the athletic young Ethel back out of the room in a passion. She met another in Lady Punsbury, said to be the only woman feared by Queen Victoria. "Not bad for eighty-two," said Lady Punsbury, complacently inviting her young admirer to feel her hips. "When I got back, Ethel had been gone half an hour," wrote a Punsbury daughter, "and the house was still rocking."

These memoirs are punctuated by the sound of slamming doors and splintering wood. Ethel was forbidden to use the front door in at least two of her friends' houses (one was Lambeth Palace), and had to be smuggled in by the backstairs, for fear of upsetting the head of the household. Her own father had very nearly kicked in her door, when at nineteen she locked herself in her bedroom in protest against his refusal to let her study music. Major-General Smyth, who loathed all artists as deeply as he mistrusted radicals, had never attended a concert in his life and declared he would sooner see his daughter walk the streets than take up a musical career.

In the 1870s this was, of course, absolutely normal. It was Ethel's attitude that was odd; and it speaks well for her father that, when she won hands down — packing herself off alone and unescorted to pick up some sort of tuition on spec in Leipzig — the two afterwards got on famously. They were strikingly similar; brusque, hasty, choleric, vastly energetic and furmably intolerant of people or points of view that clashed with their own.

Ethel in later life inclined, like her father, to treat whole sections of the male sex as effete, incompetent ninnyes. Some resisted her manfully, others preferred headlong flight. The Intendant of the Dresden Opera House, asked if he knew her, replied that he "did indeed know Miss Ethel Smyth, and that if he spied her walking in the streets of Dresden, he would leap into a drosky and leave the town by the next train". A few years later at Leipzig, she was so incensed by the director's cuts in one of her operas, that she withdrew the work after the first night by the simple expedient of removing all the parts from the orchestra desks, and carrying them off with her on the next train to Prague.

What made opera directors shake in their shoes was the same indomitable quality that had once touched the hearts of tough old ladies at court, and, half a century later, alternately disarmed and infuriated Virginia Woolf. Knockabout visits from Ethel Smyth became something of a running gag in later volumes of Virginia Woolf's *Diaries*, and anyone who first met her in those pages as a grumpy, ruffled, red-faced, impudent old battleaxe — a port of

bludgeoning Punch to Virginia's Judy — will find the other side of her portrait in these remarkable *Memoirs*. Ethel Smyth was twenty-four years older than Virginia Woolf. Born in an era when girls got nowhere except by a judicious combination of marriage and manipulation, she prospered by behaving — and expecting other people to treat her — at times as an honorary male. So far as men were concerned, she had nothing of the flirt in her nature. Invited to dine before the First World War with the German Chancellor (a meal at which the Emperor himself was expected to drop in impromptu), she arranged to come on straight from the golf course, having taken the precaution of getting her hair fixed beforehand by a hairdresser. "the erections of professionals being as a rule small and likely to look better, in spite of the ravages of wind and bunker-thumping, than the hasty improvisations of an amateur."

If her relations with men were businesslike at best, she reserved tenderness and gallantry for her own sex, embarking early on a series of passionate friendships with remarkable women of whom Virginia Woolf was the last. Her *March of the Women* was played on organ and cornet at a suffragette rally in the Albert Hall in 1911. For two years she devoted herself to fighting under Mrs Pankhurst's command with such exuberance that any professional success in the musical field ever afterwards counted for her as a victory for women's suffrage. Getting her music performed in German opera-houses — always uphill work — became a matter not simply of feminism but, as tension rose between England and Germany, of patriotism as well ("the joy of battle now possessed me . . . and also a fierce desire that England should win in the end!").

She had always conducted her career like a military campaign, laying siege to management, enlisting patrons, methodically roping in anyone likely to help with promotion, from royalty downwards (the first public performance of a Smyth composition was given by Ethel herself, rendering all parts including trumpet and chorus, before the Queen and her court at Balmoral). Her taste belonged very much to her own times: anti-Wagnerian, with a strong predilection for Grieg, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, and little apparent use for subsequent developments (Gustav Mahler at Vienna figures in these memoirs solely in his capacity as a potential impresario). It is not easy to hear any of her music today, and Ronald Crichton in his preface puts forward no great claims for it. But he could hardly have served her better, as a writer, than in this admirable abridgement based on ten original volumes of reminiscences, travel and what people in those days called jottings. The new, streamlined *Memoirs*, which make up in structure what they lack in prolixity and repetition, are sharp, pithy, vigorous, shrewdly observant and entertaining.

Bespoke boyhood

Andrew Hislop

TERENCE STAMP
Stamp Album
202pp. Bloomsbury. £11.95.
07475 00320

"You can tell a lot about a woman from her book," writes Terence Stamp in his memoir of his working-class upbringing in the East End, *Stamp Album*. "Book" refers here, however, not to rival female authorial output but (with uncertain etymology — bookend — friend?) to "the kind of guys that women choose". *Stamp Album* is also a book which tells us a lot about its man — or rather its boy, since there is almost no reference to Stamp's later fame and fortune as an actor. It is a remarkably detailed recollection of his early years. His literary return to his roots is accompanied by a selection of appropriate linguistic throwbacks which gives us a feel of period and place. "It's not every guy whose first bespoke is a winner," he says of his initiation into the delights of a tailored suit which mimicked a step up from trying, like one of his local heroes, to dress like Dean Martin.

Correspondent worth citing

Isabel Colegate

GEORGIANA BLAKISTON (Editor)
Letters of Conrad Russell 1897-1947
278pp. Murray. £16.95.
07195 43827

Loneliness and an affectionate nature, a philosophical turn of mind and a private income, a wide curiosity, an absence of domestic encumbrances: these are the preconditions which produced such admirable letter-writers as William Cowper and Edward FitzGerald. They also apply to Conrad Russell. He was born in 1878, the son of Lord Arthur Russell, who was the brother of the ninth Duke of Bedford, and his French wife. Tall and remarkably good-looking but physically awkward, he had a humorous simplicity of character which from his Oxford days onward endeared him to a great number of his contemporaries. In his later life he became a prolific letter-writer, and in particular he wrote to the beautiful women whose friendship meant most to him. Of these the first was Katharine Asquith, who had married his greatest friend, Raymond Asquith, the second was Dinna Couper whose vitality and charm enormously brightened his middle years, and the third was the then Lady Weymouth, whose wit and high spirits enchanted him when they became friends at the beginning of the Second World War.

Having failed to distinguish himself academically at Balliol, Russell worked for a time as private secretary to Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office, and in 1907 went to New York to work in Barings Bank for six months. There he heard of Raymond Asquith's engagement. "It is dreadful to think I can't dine with him again without that dull white-faced girl with a face like a rabbit sitting opposite. I can't believe I shall ever like her; and I know she won't like me." Back in England and working for a stock-jobber in the City, he overcame his aversion on finding that his friend's wife was a fellow ornithologist.

Russell was thirty-six when the First World War broke out. He was sent to France, with the Bedfordshire Yeomanry in 1915. Many of his friends, including Raymond Asquith and Katharine's brother, Edward Horner, were killed in the war, every moment of which Russell hated. In 1917, when he was on leave, he asked Katharine Asquith to marry him; she replied that she would never marry again. After the war, he found himself unable to settle back into life in the City. He took up farming in Sussex, and at the same time renewed his social life, staying with friends in various country houses. There are some nice period touches in the letters. "The girls are all alike here," he writes to Katharine Asquith. "Shingled and dressed in plain green fishermen's jerseys, beehive hats pulled hard down and huge horn spectacles. There were five or

six or like as peas . . ."

When Katharine Asquith was despondent, Russell wrote: "It seems to me that the best plan is to expect nothing, absolutely nothing, from life and especially no sort of worldly success of any kind or description, not even in playing the piano or breeding cows or anything. About this one must be ruthless with oneself . . . one then begins to find out that there are things that give one comfort and even pleasure: friends, reading philosophy and Shakespeare and being in the country in the spring."

Their correspondence was much concerned with Roman Catholicism, to which Katharine Asquith was converted in 1924. (Russell remained sceptical, and when on his death-bed he was finally received into the Church it may have been largely to give pleasure to an old friend; this it certainly did.) Mells Manor, the Somerset home of the Horners, was more or less the centre of Russell's life from 1927, when he went to live in the village and farm the home farm, until his death. Lady Horner's house parties, and later on Katharine Asquith's social life, which was much influenced by her religion, fell under his observant and often quizzical gaze.

In 1933 Russell went to see Diana Cooper performing in *The Miracle* in Cardiff. He had known her for some time; his brothers Cind and Gilbert had both wanted to marry her, but it was only after this visit ("Cardiff is engraved on my heart") that she assumed her pre-eminent position in his life. They corresponded frequently, met often, and when her husband's career took her away for long periods — to the East, to Algiers, to the Embassy in Paris — he missed her cruelly. He never ceased to find her vitality and beauty uplifting. During the Second World War when she was away became friends with his neighbour Daphne Weymouth, whose wild humour he relished and whose companionship to some extent compensated for the absence of Diana. To both of them his letters are charming, the waggishness never becoming too whimsical, nor the frequently expressed love and admiration mawkish. Whether he was writing about village life and the exigencies of agriculture, or his excursions into the wider world, or his thoughts about his reading, his comments are perspicacious, pungently expressed and often very funny.

Georgiana Blakiston, Conrad Russell's niece, has edited his letters. She mentions other correspondents (rather too unobtrusively), among them Sir Alan Lascelles, who had been a close friend since he and Russell were in the trenches together and who shared his liking for odd pieces of information. These letters were kept and treasured by their recipient until he lent them to a sick friend and they disappeared. Perhaps the appearance of this book might prompt their rediscovery. It may yet transpire that Conrad Russell at Mells will stand beside William Cowper at Olney and Edward FitzGerald at Woodbridge.

the appearances of gurus in the text are rare and discreet. More common and irritating are the references to people's birthsigns. But doubts about the appropriateness of the mystical in describing so earthy an environment are undermined by the startling revelation that, long before his merchant seaman father belatedly tried some Lebanese red, he had the experience of leaving his body in a barber's shop and watching himself being shaved.

A quasi-mystical engagement with his surrounding can also be seen developing in one of Stamp's life-long obsessions which superficially might appear at odds with a cultivation of the inner being: his love of clothes. An actor's chronology of his early wardrobe might seem a monstrous vanity; but Stamp so convincingly evokes the adolescent's concern with his image that when the arrival of the forefaded "bespoke" prompts a digression about a conversation with an Italian tailor on his art it appears less of an affectation. And that is the strength of the book — to look back without the distortion of too much hindsight to a time when Stamp's vision of what lay beyond table tennis and failed exams, sexual yearnings and hero worship, vague artistic longings and modest employment was so uncertain.

Of course, Stamp does not return to his youth without some post-adolescent baggage, most notably a tendency, exploited so well in Stephen Frears's film *The Hit*, to bland Cockney street wisdom with a veneer of quasi-mystical "enlightenment" drawn from regions much further East than Bow bells. However,

A voluptuous dejection

John Sturrock

ROLAND BARTHES
Incidents
116pp. Paris: Seuil. 55fr.
20200 94533
Criticisms and Truth
Translated and edited by Katri Pitcher
Keueman
119pp. Athlone Press. £25.
04851 1321X

Incidents is scraps, surely the last volume anyone will make from what is left of unpublished or uncollected Barthes. It contains two overlooked brevities: a piece about the Basque country, beside the Adour, where he was brought up and where he kept a holiday house, and another about a Paris theatre turned dance-hall — the first of these appeared in the Communist newspaper *L'Humanité*, the second in *Vogue for Men*, which is no mean spread of media as a market for one's occasional writings.

The other two items in *Incidents* have more to them and trace the move in Barthes's writing life as he aged towards an anxious, teasing explicitness about himself. The first, "Incidents", is a set of notes which he made during visits to North Africa in 1968-9. These are three or four lines each and impassive, in imitation of the haiku that Barthes admired so much for its surprising conjunction of artistry in the form and contingency of subject. He records many ordinary moments from his time there: people met or only seen, places and objects, things said or overheard; all are particularities that he lays by unglossed, as if for future use in the novel that tempted him but which he never wrote. Their locus for the most part is the street, or the café, and their tone, frequently sexual, because by this time of his life, even though these "Incidents" were not published, Barthes's very active homosexuality had

become a feasible motif of his writing.

That theme becomes rather gloriously central in the last section of *Incidents*, which has the title of "Soirées de Paris". Here the form is no longer the subdued, alien one of the haiku, but that of the confidential journal entry. These short obituaries of Barthes's restless evenings in Paris were written in the autumn of 1979, a few months before his death, and they are not happy reading. These were nearly all evenings out, in cafés or in restaurants, at the cinema once or twice, or on the loose in the streets. His love-life was not going well. There are constant sightings and sometimes flirtations with unknown gigolos, or else rendezvous with admired and appropriate young men, but these seem all too often frustrated by his own timidity, or by the extreme fastidiousness of utterance that leads him to write, for one such evening: "lorsque je prévois de parler de quelque chose, j'en suis trop conscient et je ne dis rien". There is no sense at all that Barthes could be using his own considerable fame in intellectual Paris as a lure, only a blank sense of his exclusion, now he is in his sixties, from a world arranged for the satisfaction of the young. On a brief stay in the south-west, he experiences a total sadness which he knows at once to be a literary "value", a Romantic nostalgia he could never bring into his own writing, and this deep inhibition is compounded by his feeling of homelessness, that wherever he is, here, or in Paris, or travelling, he is "sans abri véritable".

These "soirées" are the plainest, blackest confessions Barthes can have left of his rejection, yet they are described with some elegance and that old fascination with the singularity of the passing moment; they are honest, not maudlin. And he has one strong defence left against the emptiness of his life outside the house, which is the reading he does once he gets home; that voluptuous immersion by night in the splendid prose of the classical writers from whom this supposed iconoclast among critics drew such pleasure. It is comforting,

ultimately, to find Barthes, returned perhaps from some lustful but inconclusive eye-play at the Café de Flore, opening his copy of Chateaubriand and reflecting: "Toujours cette pensée: et si les modernes se trompaient? S'ils n'avaient pas de talent?"



Such a reflection would have shocked Barthes's admirers back in the days when he wrote *Critique et vérité*, an English translation of which has at last appeared, twenty-one years after the publication of the original (which was reviewed in the *TLS* of June 23, 1966). This little book, or large pamphlet, was his waspish and brilliant answer to the attack made on him (and other "new" French critics) by Raymond Picaud in his *Nouvelle critique ou nouvelle posture*. So it is an episode in an old, now half-forgotten war rather than an essay in criticism.

tical method complete in itself; and would have made sense to have published *Incidents* and *Truth* in a single volume like the *Chambre de doléances* that first edition don't imagine it has ever been thought translating Picaud on his own, but to have there would demonstrate the full of Barthes's joyful counterstrike. Not Picaud in universities have as yet been overturned or driven into early retirement, would have been merit in including translation a statement of the critic: doxy for which, know it or not, they

Criticism and Truth is first a relief Picaud and then a manifesto of Barthes's view of what literary criticism should both counts, it is a most telling work, mocking the dead positivism, the and the secret ideology of academic as Picaud, or, concisely laying out more enlightening, more generous a realistic understanding of how right about things. The quarrel, extreme between a "closed" view of the text, a "view of it, as an unstable co-wards inviting novel reinterpretation moves in and as the knowledge of critics change. Barthes here asser lowship of writer with critic, in the of *écriture*, the critic being someone in order to write, and whose own "turn around" the words of someone

The related translation, by Katri Keueman, is efficient if quite, but with Barthes's by this stage quite da uphoristic manner, too spelt out colourless. That was perhaps unav: there are one or two places where seductive precision of his fine distinction. Where Barthes, for example "In véritable critique des institut langues ne consiste pas à 'juger distinguer, à les séparer, à les déd itutes), Ms Keueman has "does i 'judging' them, but in perceiving, i in *dividing*", which is weaker and r logous. Barthes's three infinitives cessive, and progress from "dis rather than 'perceiving', to 'und term we have lately become used ing', not 'dividing'".

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Going into the dark

Andrew Motion

VERNON WATKINS
The Collected Poems
495pp. Ipswich: Golgonouza Press; distributed
by Unwin Hyman. £18.50.
0900348334

Vernon Watkins is often referred to as "a poet's poet" – the polite term used in desecration someone who isn't read much. The festschrift published in his honour in 1970, three years after his death, bears witness on page after page to what Michael Hamburger calls "an almost mystical creed" that set him distinctly apart from his contemporaries. This creed appeared intact in three posthumous collections, and in the massive *Collected Poems* is demonstrated as having a truly remarkable coherence and solidity. However disagreeable or unsympathetic some readers might find the beliefs it embodies, but however indigestible the richly haphazard language in which they are expressed might be, the book is a handsome monument to Watkins' integrity and artistic devotion.

In one respect, indeed, the volume is rather too exactly expressive of Watkins' poetic philosophy. "He would not write criticism himself," Hamburger remembered in the festschrift, "and was deeply distrustful of analytical, as distinct from intuitive, processes of any kind." The *Collected Poems*, taking this attitude to its logical conclusion, is compiled with no editor acknowledged on the title-page, the briefest of forewords by Ruth Pryor, no notes whatsoever, and a short puff from Kathleen Raine confined to the inside back flap of the dust-jacket. This encourages us, of course, to contemplate the book as the self-contained universe that Watkins himself wanted to create, but since much of the furniture in that universe is recondite in its references and arcane in its idiom, it's hard not to feel that – apart from existing fans – only snobs and scholars can be made to feel easily welcome.

Most of Watkins' poetic career forms one long precedent for this disappointment. When

his first collection, *Ballad of the Marie Lloyd*, appeared in 1941, he was able to point to the example of Yeats (who had died, after all, only two years previously) as a heroic justification for his rhapsodical tone of voice. Kathleen Raine has even gone so far as to urge that Watkins "was surely the poet Yeats was writing for: with certainly he stood on holy ground". This judgment ably conflates two themes which dominate Watkins' first book: a humbly reverential attitude to incidents and individuals, and a persistent effort to relate them to received patterns of religious or metaphysical thought. In "Yeats' Tower", for instance:

Surely the finger of God that governs the stars
And feels the flashed mystery of the moving world
Stirring the water to leaves in foh! on foh!
Now touches this, this long grass in the field:
O under grass, O under grass, the secret.

In the half-dozen other collections Watkins published during his lifetime, these themes and attitudes remain unflinchingly constant. They are diversified by the accumulation of experience – so that, for instance, married love, war and reflections on children join the suggestive antiquity of landscape, admired writers and the passage of time as his main preoccupations – but they show little sign of being enriched by the development or complication of an argument. This is not to imply an intellectual feebleness in the poems; rather than seeking to interpret the world by means of rational processes, Watkins concentrated on trying to produce a musical language which was both the expression of an exact state of mind and also an act of homage to mystery and uncertainty. He discovered and deployed this language at the very beginning of his career, and had no reason to depart from it or dilute it.

There are exceptions to this general rule, of course – the fine elegy "Yeats in Dublin" is a case in point – but usually the logic of Watkins' poems depends on the cohesion of elaborate rhyme-schemes, the urgency of rhetorical evocations and the coral-like accumulation of favourite images (sea, wind, rocks, fossils, light). The result is a body of work which often sounds public (in the sense of being declamatory), but is in fact obdurately private; it describes a world of personal faith in a manner which is unworlly.

Lost creatures still preserve the power
To mime a nature not their own,
By imitating stalk and flower
To darken and deceive the stone.
Alive, this could not yet obtain
The transformation death achieves.
Not wind or sea but stony rain
Made the sea-bly put on leaves.

In the 1940s, while recognizing that the sympathetic context for his poems was enlarged by the work of Dylan Thomas and writers associated with the Apocalyptic, he knew that the values held dear by Auden, MacNeice, Spender *et al* had no place in his imaginative world. Where he was referential, straight-faced, oblique and rhetorical, they were circumstantial, witty, direct and pragmatic. Midway through the following decade, pragmatism became virtually *de rigueur*: the Movement's elevation of high art (however much some Movement writers might have married it to a more "poetic" manner) left Watkins sounding like a blatherer. And in our own day, when many young poets have reverted to a more highly coloured and metaphorical mode, the prevailing concentration on the poetics of the eye have made Watkins' poetics of the ear sound windy or cranky. In his life, and after his death, Watkins' poems have been overtaken again and again by a series of handwagons. Neglect, apparently, is the unavoidable price of his truth to his own vision.

One way of redeeming Watkins from this neglect would be to socialize the work by showing how it related to the life. The more dramatic the career, the more the poems might benefit. But in the sense that biographers use the phrase, Watkins didn't have much of a life: He was born in Maesteg, Glamorgan, in 1906 (the same year as Betjeman, Empson and Patrick Kavanagh were born). Educated at Repton, he proceeded to Cambridge, but left without taking a degree and returned to Wales, to Swansea, where from 1928 to 1941 he lived with his parents and worked as a clerk in Lloyds Bank, refusing every opportunity for



A detail from Anthony Gascoigne's picture of Pierre Iffon, a portrait chamber in Dyfed. It is reproduced from *Ancient Places: The prehistoric and Celtic sites of Britain* by Glyn Daniel and Paul Bahn (1979). Constable. £14.95. 0094672103.

promotion so that he could concentrate on his writing. (He would later report that his father had been the youngest manager at Lloyds, and he was the oldest clerk.) When the war broke out he spent a short period in the Home Guard, then joined the RAF – first in its Police then in its Intelligence units. In 1944 he got married, and when the war ended he returned to the bank, living on the Gower peninsula in a house at the end of an on-made-up road overlooking the cliffs, with his wife and (eventually) four sons and a daughter. He retired from the bank in time to take up a small handful of teaching appointments – in Swansea and, in 1967, in Seattle, where he died playing tennis. A prosaic way to go, one might think, after a lifetime devoted to refined musings.

This catalogue accurately reflects Watkins' avowed intent to perfect the work, rather than the life, but omits to mention two crucial friendships. The first, and most celebrated, was with Dylan Thomas, whom Watkins met in 1935. When Watkins published his correspondence with Thomas, after the latter's death, it emerged that his value to the younger man depended to a large extent on practical matters (he often lent Thomas money), but Watkins himself was always at pains to emphasize more elevated concerns. Although there were marked differences between their temperaments (Paul Ferris, Thomas's biographer, admits that Watkins, "a stubborn Christian without guile in everyday life, was a strange friend to Thomas"), their work was mutually supportive in the attempt to create a "Welsh revival". More specifically, the paradoxical innocence which Watkins detected in Thomas both licensed his own unworldliness and allowed him to benefit from Thomas's more earthy literary example. "He showed me what was fresh in my work and what was stale and derived from other poets . . . We had immediately a very deep affinity, though his style and method of composition were completely different from mine, he working outward from a colloquial core of texture, I working towards the concrete from a musical or articulated source." In his elegy for Thomas, "A True Picture Restored", he made the same point:

He never let proud nature fall
Out of its pristine state.
The hunchback fed upon a love
That made the crooked straight.
No single promise broken
On which the heart must wait.

The second important friendship, with Philip Larkin, is more surprising, given the wide dissimilarities between beliefs shared by the hard core of the Movement, and Watkins' own. In the introduction to the 1966 reissue of *The North Ship*, Larkin records how he first met Watkins at the Oxford University English Club in 1943, and how he subsequently invited Watkins to criticize his work. The much-mentioned Yeatsian echoes which variously haunt and tinkle through Larkin's early poems provided a firm foundation for Watkins's generous encouragement. After Larkin had left Oxford he didn't come into regular contact with Watkins again until the late 1950s, by which time, of course, Larkin's "Celtic fever" had abated, and his poems had acquired an empirical element which was alien to Watkins.

We approach youth in death
The estate dance in age.
Youth is like a coffin
Until those slightest eyes
Rarely youth and breath
Then the miraculous form
Casts out a dying gaze
Always another day.

Scarcely a page can be turned in subsequent collections without some version of the same emphasis coming to light. Almost at random: "light unaltered seems / To break from all that's gone"; "hearing time's spectre make / Dynamic moan"; "I cannot separate, / So soundlessly they shine, / The windings of past fate, / Nor the last lives of mine". In his final, posthumous collection, he's still at it:

Let discord beat around my ears,
I know too well what time may bring,
Nor can I touch the truest tears
Such is the secret of their spring.

This dogged pursuit of a particular theme – no matter how elusive the theme might be – can't avoid seeming dreary. One has to suppose that even people who share Watkins' view of experience might find it monotonous. And for those who don't find his beliefs returning an echo, the charge of repetitiveness is reinforced by other simple accusations. What enlightenment is there in the book for a reader who cannot suspend reasoned doubts that the evidence for cyclical time does nothing to postpone the finality of death? Furthermore, Watkins' case for the consoling existence of the past-in-the-present would be a great deal more credible if the present itself received more detailed attention. The context for very many of Watkins' reveries is – not surprisingly – the Gower coast, but its grand panoramas and precise details are brought vividly before us all too rarely.

The result is to leave us feeling that the poems profess a love for life which is neither substantiated by close looking, nor articulated

by narrative or argument. (Revealingly, Owen Watkins admitted that her husband had no sense of plot: "He knew Tennyson's *Maud* almost by heart without ever realizing that there was a story in it.") Specifics, characteristically, are no sooner seen than they are mythologized or converted into abstracts to play their part in an inner theatre. "Symbols are circling you, / Leaf-patterns flying, / All that in Spring was new / Drifting and dying", he says in "Movement from Autumn"; and in an earlier poem, "Poet and Goldsmith", a bird (species not identified) is driven away from a promisingly naturalistic pose into a tree where it rapidly ceases to matter as a thing in itself:

He watched the bough
Tremble. Now it was still. There was dew on the field.
Petals began to close. The roots of the elms
Held his wonder: "Be warned: about you are
symbols."

This kind of conversion will always be objected to by those who prefer the empirical manner which has dominated British poetry for the past thirty-odd years. And those who wish to defend Watkins might reasonably argue that the objections are grounded in matters of taste which are merely fashionable. The more serious charge, though, is to accuse Watkins of damaging the mystical and/or metaphysical case he wishes to make by the very means he uses to express it. He intends to explore what Kathleen Raine calls the "deep, but dazzling darkness" which surrounds daily consciousness, yet his language ensures that the darkness and the daylight never get on speaking terms with each other.

Muffled harmonies, modest memorials

Lachlan Mackinnon

GEOFFREY HARVEY
The Romantic Tradition to Modern English Poetry: Rhetoric and experience
134pp. Macmillan. £25.
0333408489

TERRY WHALEN
Philip Larkin and English Poetry
164pp. Macmillan. £25.
0333398165
HARRY CHAMBERS (Editor)
An Enormous Yes: In Memoriam Philip Larkin
(1922-1985)
72pp. Liskeard: Peterloo. £4.50.
0905291859

The "English Tradition" Geoffrey Harvey explores "lies in the individual poet's conviction that the writer within a complex set of relations existing in a state of tension", and in the poet's drive for what Harvey calls "equipoise" within that tension. He finds that the use of "soul", "eye", "harmony" and "joy" in "Tintern Abbey" constitutes an "ironic rhetoric" which distinguishes between common and private experience, but his Wordsworth is an oddly depoliticized creature, one gets from Harvey no sense of the political radicalism which informs and shapes the poetic novelty of *Lyrical Ballads*, and the muting of tone is consonant with this book's generally muffled quality.

Hardy, Betjeman and Larkin are Harvey's other concerns. There are some good close readings of Hardy, although Harvey sees too simple a contrast between verse and refrain in "Daring Wind and Rain", where the "Clocks and carpets and chairs / On the lawn all day" intimate death as much as domestic removal. Betjeman's "The Heart of Thomas Hardy" is treated as a celebration and Harvey ignores Donald Davie's point that the phrase "various unmarried mothers" undermines the poem in a way which must leave us in doubt about just how far Betjeman is serious. Harvey's whole discussion of Betjeman is undermined, in fact, by his ponderous, philosophical approach, which cannot always cope with the poet's peculiar idiom, the material objects and brand-names which so delight some readers while seeming to others mawkish and sentimentally closed: Betjeman is a more modest poet than Harvey makes him seem; similarly it doesn't do to call Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" a "bold declaration of faith".

Harvey writes with more attention when he

comes to Larkin, being particularly sensible of embarrassment as a poetic ploy, but when he identifies the speaker of "Sympathy in White Major" as "a retired military man" something goes haywire. It is impossible to see how he fails to recognize the speaker as Larkin's own poetic persona, at once funny and plangent about his life. The symbolist title should have warned him.

Harvey's book feels like the compilation of expanded articles it is. Terry Whalen's *Philip Larkin and English Poetry* is similar in form, if even less ambitious in scope. His misquotations suggest rhythmic deafness; he seems to think of Mayhew as describing the eighteenth century (though, in the absence of a note, it is hard to be certain what he means), thinks Pound's "Image" and Larkin's "seed thought / felt" experiences are the same, and puts forward Ted Hughes, Thom Gunn and R. S. Thomas as "Larkin's Proper Peers" because they retain "the curious spirit . . . in spite of the wasteland heritage of much of the writing in this century". Wallace Stevens is a "late Imagist theorist" – but I need hardly go on. Dashing away with his smoothing-iron, Whalen knocks as much quiddity out of poetry as possible, although he can be sensitive to movements of tone in Larkin's work, as in his reading of "High Windows" as a poem that "undercuts the initial blindness". He makes rather too much of Lawrence's place in Larkin's literary ancestry, although it is only fair to acknowledge Lawrence. What is saddening about both these books is their conventionality: out both these books is the received Harvey's "Romantic" tradition is the received Larkin's "sensitivity to beauty" is already a cliché.

Poems, prose tributes, published and unpublished pieces by Philip Larkin himself, photographs and drawings make up Harry Chambers's attractive memorial, *An Enormous Yes*. Two poems stand out. David Sutton's "Place-Names" begins "They are worn / Out / As silvered oak, / The old names: / Coombs and Barton, / Stow and Stoke", an Edward Thomas-like relic of sound which is brought together with the epigraph from Larkin's "MCMXIV" to and

Bless the numbers, men
Of pen or plough,
History, receive
Another now.

Poet, labourer,
They do not pass.

Mrs Busy Bee's lecture

Nicholas Jenkins

A. L. ROWSE
The Poet Auden: A personal memoir
138pp. Methuen. £9.95.
0413403904

A. L. Rowse and W. H. Auden met at Oxford in the 1920s, where the young Rowse took the boy, in that ominous phrase, "under [his] wing". However, the ungrateful Auden soon got his third and made off to the "unspeakable vulgarity of Berlin", while Rowse remained at All Souls to contemplate what should have been. Thereafter, it was all a question of differing standards. With well over thirty titles to his name since the younger man's death in 1973, it seems inevitable that Rowse should eventually have given us his "Auden". Here, then, is a "memoir" of a man whom, whether in person or in his works, Rowse hardly knew, did not like, likes even less now, and is certainly incapable of appreciating. These disqualifications, though, have not prevented him from inflating a chapter of *Memoirs of Men and Women* (1980) into this short but lamentable book.

It is hard to find any recognizable genre into which the volume will fit. Although it proceeds chronologically, the book is not a historical account of Auden's life and writing. Indeed, a historian – defined by Rowse as one who "pretends to get facts right" – could hardly condone the teeming errors of fact, date, identification, quotation and interpretation. (What this amounts to, since there is no primary research beyond the transcription of the marginal cum-

ments from his copies of Auden's works, is an inability to copy out data correctly from the two main biographies.) Though censorious, this is not a critical work either, even in intention: "Artistic inspiration is a tender plant – so much so that it does not do with too much talky-talky about it." As the younger Auden, with his relish for a good case-history, would have seen, the best clues to the form lie in a tone – anomalously high for Oxford one would have thought, a blend of Malvolio, Tiresias and Mrs Busy Bee.

What, actually, was Auden's view of his "senior"? In spite of the poet's resolve to look "pleased when caught / By a bare no / Hideola", Rowse is clear: "Wyston's attitude to me was respectful, if not positively deferential – there was something of that at the end as at the beginning. He was schoolmasterish, every-lady recognised; very well, I was dismissive." As a rule, Auden seems to have passed over Rowse in silence, but he did allow himself a Christ public smile in his toast for the 1960 Oxford Choral Society. A line about those "rather odd fish" – "Harold Acton, Tom Driberg and Rowse" – begins with Betjemansque indulgence and ends, with that solitary surname, in a finely-judged, almost Papean snarl.

And Rowse's vision of his subject? Materially, Auden's life was – to use the preferred terms – far from First Class: "O the outliness, the scrofulous, the positive grubbiness, the aura and aroma of nicotine unwashedness!" Nor, as a mind, was Auden quite-quite "I do not think that Auden was intellectually strong enough to formulate a position of his own." The poems, too, are marked down, for how much pleasure do they give? "I must honestly say, not much – chiefly the shorter poems, no much of the longer."

In fact, if the book contains a single discernible impulse, then it must be a craving in Britain to long to arrest development. Auden rapidly outgrew his undergraduate struts and Rowse's world, yet, it seems, in Cypelocean High-Table eye the poet's gifts on courage continue to annoy: "In some poem one observes – what the ordinary reader might not – the internal rhymes (I favour and u them myself, nobody notices)." The levelling indiscriminate. For instance, Auden's 1,70 line "New Year Letter" is balanced against twenty-line Rowse lyric: "did it not add up much the same as my own poem . . . ?" He v not even be outdone in weakness: "I 'wound' gave Wyston trouble for years though nothing like so much as my o duodenal trouble, and operations, gave m Presumably one reason for Rowse's insistence on that crucial age-gap – "I was three years senior. That makes all the difference at university: seniority draws a line, and that I valled all through our lives".

However, this book is not just about a pl to m Auden. As the symbolic representative of the world outside Oxford which Auden ch Christopher Isherwood, too, incurs dis sure. The novelist is the bad angel, for, ex like Rowse in being three years "senior" Auden, he was exactly unlike him in o respects: "Auden looked up to his critic telligence as to no one else" (my italics). (I for peace, then, that in 1937 Auden m to find an alternative host for his friend, otherwise, he told Mrs Dods, Isherwood "threatened with having to stay with R (Auden's misspelling).) Nor is it simply a target smack at Auden's closest friends vilified are representative figures of m culture, including, among many, many t Thomas Mann, Britten, Larkin, H Freud, Stravinsky, Edmund Wilson Hammariskjöld and E. M. Forster. In t though, one senses that the real indet not even so much of an age, as of ex itself. Sheer unrarity emerges nno flames and filling masonry of the boo pagans the don welcomes the poet bac Souls in 1972: "We resumed relations old looking of years before, with m senior giving him a lecture on how th changed." A ludicrous inversion, and i which presumably did not dwell on nchivements. Altogether, it seems, Auden had written or said during the dent years made the slightest differen all, his Third Class destiny was still wa niche for a schoolmaster who once ha Rowse.

Consciences in the city

John Lucas

IAN FLETCHER, *Editor*
British Poetry and Prose 1870-1905
497pp, Oxford University Press, £19.50,
019 2541862

Most accounts of the final decades of the nineteenth century have tended to characterize the period as one of extinction. Orthodox religion is in retreat before the confident aggressions of positivist science. Empire is becoming hugely, wearisomely, problematic. The pre-1848 confidence of radical politics has declined into "labourism" or "the culture of consolation". What, then, can the writer offer but "dissipation and despair", for he or she has no expectation of being able to intervene, as writer, in the life of the times. In, indeed, is pushed to the margins by the relentless pressures of besetment, of art-as-commodity. In his elegant and witty introduction to the Oxford Anthology *British Poetry and Prose 1870-1905*, Ian Fletcher places at these matters, though he also rightly suggests that among the prior conditions for modernism the city has established itself as the new exemplar of community (or lack of community). What he doesn't do is to see how this exemplar could be used to challenge those accounts of the period which emphasize the enmity and neglect which, more positive, responses.

It could of course be argued that such responses are characteristic of an earlier period, one that begins in 1789, with the publication of *Stings of Innocence*, and ends in 1865, with the publication of *Our Mutual Friend*. Certainly, it is in this period that English writing is at its most experimental, most challenging; and it is also in this period that writers are most confidently aware of themselves as intervening in crucial debates. There are the ceaseless revivals of the sons against the fathers, whether those fathers are called Nabokov or Timothy Shelley: there is very little anywhere in later writing that goes beyond Dickens's various accounts of the city; and it is at least arguable that human nature changed less in 1910 than in 1855, with the publication of *Men and Women*.

This great wave of creativity had virtually spent itself by the time Fletcher's anthology begins, and it is perhaps for this reason that he chooses to include *British* writers of the period. Oddly, however, this narrows rather than widens the possibilities. It is presumably the emphasis on Britishness which has led to the exclusion of James and Conrad, for which the inclusion of Edward Dowden and W. J. Renton (say) hardly seems an adequate compensation. Moreover, the anthology does not really take up the challenge implicit in its title. "British" must surely imply imperialism and, then, challenges to imperialism, whether from Ireland or from within England itself. Yet Wilde "the aesthetic Fenian", in Tom Paulin's formulation, makes no appearance here. Nor does political Yeats. The selections from both are disappointingly incurious and trap them in trite *fin-de-siècle* postures from which they deserve release. And with the exception of Edward Carpenter, there are no socialist writers in show. Fletcher covers up by asserting that, *A Dream of John Ball* apart, "the imaginative prose of the movement is barely distinguished", but might it not at least stretch to include Margaret Harkness and R. B. Cunningham Graham, who go unmentioned (as for that matter do the utopian fictions of W. H. Hudson and G. K. Chesterton, while H. G. Wells is represented by "The Country of the Blind")?

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This brings us to the crux of the matter. Fletcher sometimes seems to be selecting or rejecting material on what he would regard as stylistic grounds, while on other occasions more nakedly ideological considerations are at work. The result is that his anthology significantly distorts the period it covers, most importantly when it comes to writing about the city. If Richard Le Gallienne's unspeakably awful "A Bullard of London" is to be included, why should Fletcher exclude the entirely serious and challenging accounts of London to be found in Hale White's *Deliverance* or *Clara Topgood*? When Clara goes to work for a bookseller in Holborn, "everything she touched was foul with grime... a loathsome composition of everything disgusting which could be produced by millions of human beings and animals packed together in soot". Hale White here registers that entropic sense of community breaking down that is so marked a feature of late nineteenth-century writing and of social experience, and as a partial result of which both socialism and what can be called Anglo-Saxon ruralism gain currency. If we except a not very representative passage from Thomson's "The City of Dreadful Night", these matters are not present in the anthology. Why not?

The best way of answering this is by pointing to a curious passage near the end of Fletcher's introduction. He is here rightly castigating those who wish to affirm the unproblematic Englishness of English art, writing, or whatever. "Mougelet talking in one's sleep is an arid exercise", he says. "And this reminds even more true of those celebrations which are confined to the regional and local past: back to John Clare or back to Edward Thomas, back to Ivor Gurney; to some kind or other that is forever England." If Fletcher means to lambast those establishment ruralists who endorse Clare the "peasant poet" and Thomas "the heart-of-Englandism", then well enough. But I suspect he confuses the complicated actuality of the writers themselves with take-over bids which have been made by those who have deep-rooted motives for turning Clare, Thomas *et al* into far less complicated and altogether more compliant figures. It matters,

Orthodox controversialist

Ian Ker

MALCOLM WOODFIELD
R. H. Hutton: Critic and Theologian: The writings of R. H. Hutton on Newman, Arnold, Tennyson, Wordsworth, and George Eliot
227pp, Oxford: Clarendon Press, £25,
019 8186642

Richard Holt Hutton was not only one of the leading Victorian literary critics, but as a journalist-theologian he exercised a unique influence on public opinion at a time of extraordinary religious upheaval. Unlike so many of his contemporaries, he did not proceed from Christianity to agnosticism or unbelief. On the contrary: born (in 1826) the son of a Unitarian minister, he began by studying for the Unitarian ministry under James Martineau; but driven particularly towards P. D. Maurice's liberal Anglicanism, he came to accept the central Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. He was eventually an open sympathizer of high Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism, and above all a champion of orthodoxy. For many years he was joint editor, with Walter Bagshot, of the *National Review*, but his real opportunity came in 1861 when he became joint proprietor of the *Spectator*, of which he continued to be literary editor until within a few months of his death in 1897.

Hutton's intervention in the public clash between Charles Kingsley and John Henry Newman not only involved him in one of the most celebrated controversies of the day, but brought together both his literary and his theological interests in his review (in February 1864) of Newman's publication of his correspondence with Kingsley. Newman's pamphlet caused a literary as well as a religious sensation, and Hutton's support for him helped de-

termine the roots are bedded in those last decades of the nineteenth century, which is when the facts and implications of discontinuity begin to make themselves felt. This is why London becomes so important: it embodies discontinuity, it collapses — the point is obvious — elements of time and place, or at least does so for those who dream of order and continuity as inhering in a vertically structured society such as could, so the claim goes, be found in a "timeless" rural England. For others, of course, London offers an opportunity to restructure ways of thinking about society, indeed it is that opportunity. To refuse to take account of any of this is to limit, very severely, the range of the anthology. The point may be made even more emphatically if I note that Fletcher rules out of consideration Hardy's *Wessex Poems* and thus a number of fine poems which teach on or explore matters of discontinuity. "Friends Beyond", "The Imprecipient", "In a Ewelczne near Weatherbury", these and others ought to have been included, especially as Fletcher can hardly claim that they are less accomplished than the work of — well, of at least a dozen poets who are included.

Yet this brings me to what is best about the anthology. As everybody knows, Fletcher is the great authority on the 1890s, and the present work gives him perhaps more opportunity than he has ever before had to put that authority to good use. In this respect he does not fail. Yet what is most interesting is less his choice of writers of whom some of us will have heard little if anything, than his 1890-ish view of others who have passed into the canon. Writing in 1896, John Jacobs remarked that "It is difficult for those who have not lived through it to understand the influence that George Eliot had upon those of us who came to our intellectual majority in the seventies." The present anthology reveals Fletcher's temperamental dislike of moral earnestness, of anything which approaches didacticism or which claims a virtue for itself in reverencing the natural world. Hence his challenging contention that Swinburne is a better poet than Hopkins. "The 1890s was an international decade", Fletcher remarks, "though the main commerce of the mind and taste was with France." And he then

significance, for Newman's rehabilitation lent Catholicism a wholly new credibility. Hutton's contribution was noteworthy both for his vindication of Newman's religious integrity and for his appreciation of Newman as "not only one of the greatest of English writers, but, perhaps, the very greatest master of delicate and polished sarcasm in the English language". That remarkable review receives less than half a sentence from Malcolm Woodfield — which is characteristic of his R. H. Hutton: Critic and Theologian. A fairly arbitrary selectiveness may be venial enough in a dissertation — where this kind of defensive pattern is commonplace. "Although drawing on the prodigious range of Hutton's writing, this study concentrates on his work on five writers in particular, in an effort to bring out the intrinsic value of his criticism as well as showing how their writing met in the mind of one of their contemporaries" — but one is surely entitled to find in an expansive published monograph some definite "thesis" to justify the circumscribed nature of the discussion. Again, a monograph on a particular aspect of a major author is one thing, but it seems perverse to bring out such a narrow study of a relatively minor Victorian writer: since the writer in question was a prolific and versatile critic, a comprehensive survey was especially called for.

Apart from the fact that the book is not a full-scale study of Hutton, there are other much graver defects: its grimy style is a rather shocking reminder that it is possible now to "do research" in English literature in an English university without having attained a certain basic fluency in written English. A constantly irritating example is the wearying repetition of the name "Hutton" (it appears no less than half a dozen times on practically every page). The bibliography has slovenly abbreviations of titles and authors' names. The "Tractarian

compares Swinburne with Baudelaire" admits that Baudelaire is by far the better poet "he has a gift for luminous concision, an energy counterpointed by an energy that is by no means always frenetic". Yet Swinburne's "Baudelaire's awareness of *emul* as the *quantum*" condition", just as he shared "the *quantum* God and the inversion of *Les Litanies* *Satan*", and further, and perhaps most importantly, the two had "a shared distrust of morality as falsifying experience". Fletcher's brief account of Swinburne is the most precise and relative stagnation that lasted 150 years. Population remained at its pre-Black Death level of 20 million until after 1800, while agricultural production, rents, prices and wages were sluggish. In *The French Peasantry 1450-1600*, first published in 1977 as part of the *Annales Économiques et Sociales*, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie investigates the causes of this structure, and his closed diction reveals the economic activity of the period the seeds of houses". No new bearings are to be found. One might disagree with the account of a vivid poem but Fletcher is in one important sense right. The attention lavished on Hutton has drawn attention away from those recent full attempts of Swinburne and his 1890s followers to connect English writing with contemporary European ideas. The championing of Hopkins has frequently been made in the name of promoting a narrow insularity, a defence of "Englishness" against which Fletcher protests. Not that he is lured into overstatement: the case for the 1890s. He brilliantly quotes Nietzsche, "that first free-standing man, the 'seductive religiosity of Parsifal'... adored by the Verlaines and John Gray of the world. And here", he continues, "we can termine why the 1890s still seem so narrow and evasive; its figures retreat from that moment when we must reject a given language and a dependent self. Decadent religiosity is more than an attempt at sublimating knowledge." This definitive remark would have been even stronger had Fletcher's anthology room for those who opposed such religious sublimation, loneliness, through other writings that testify to an authentic engagement with the city.

appears as "Sewall" throughout — except once when his name is correctly spelled, presumably as a result of careless proof-reading (Archbishop Richard Whately, on the other hand, is consistently misspelled "Whately"). The chapter on Newman takes as one of its central texts what Woodfield persists in calling the "Oxford Sermons"; but it soon becomes acandously clear that he is not aware that a philosophical *Oxford University Sermon* is a different work altogether from the pastoral and spiritual *Parochial and Plain Sermons*. Woodfield rightly appreciates the significance of Newman's writings for Hutton. It is particularly unfortunate, therefore, that his treatment of Newman is the most inconsistent part of his work. The chapter on Arnold is only slightly less unsatisfactory. Because Woodfield is obviously more at home with literary criticism than religious thought, he is rather more successful in his discussion of the sonnets of Wordsworth and Tennyson. The last convoluted and the least readable part of the book is a critique of George Eliot and the novel, which leads Woodfield to conclude that both she and Hutton — unlike Arnold, who "can be seen to be holding on to a dying past" — "can be seen to maintain 'spiritual values in a secular world' and 'saw the realistic novel as the form which cleared the way forward'".

It would be a pity, however, if this book prevented someone else from undertaking the rediscovery of Hutton that has long overdue.

Volume fifty-five of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Is Victorian Prose Writers 1867*, edited by William B. Thesing (370pp, Detroit, MI: Gale Research, \$90, 0310318181). The twenty-eight authors represented in the volume include: Benjamin Disraeli, Richard Burton, John Keble, and Samuel Smiles; there are also essays on the non-fictional writers: "Theater and the

circumstances in the grain" by David Parker. *MANUEL LEROY LADURIE*
The French Peasantry 1450-1600
first published by Alan Sheridan
Aldershot: Scolar Press, £42.50,
0507 6854

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sooner had France recovered from the devastating combination of plague, famine and war that reduced its population by half during the fourteenth century than it entered a period of relative stagnation that lasted 150 years. Population remained at its pre-Black Death level of 20 million until after 1800, while agricultural production, rents, prices and wages were sluggish. In *The French Peasantry 1450-1600*, first published in 1977 as part of the *Annales Économiques et Sociales*, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie investigates the causes of this structure, and his closed diction reveals the economic activity of the period the seeds of houses". No new bearings are to be found. One might disagree with the account of a vivid poem but Fletcher is in one important sense right. The attention lavished on Hutton has drawn attention away from those recent full attempts of Swinburne and his 1890s followers to connect English writing with contemporary European ideas. The championing of Hopkins has frequently been made in the name of promoting a narrow insularity, a defence of "Englishness" against which Fletcher protests. Not that he is lured into overstatement: the case for the 1890s. He brilliantly quotes Nietzsche, "that first free-standing man, the 'seductive religiosity of Parsifal'... adored by the Verlaines and John Gray of the world. And here", he continues, "we can termine why the 1890s still seem so narrow and evasive; its figures retreat from that moment when we must reject a given language and a dependent self. Decadent religiosity is more than an attempt at sublimating knowledge." This definitive remark would have been even stronger had Fletcher's anthology room for those who opposed such religious sublimation, loneliness, through other writings that testify to an authentic engagement with the city.

Ladurie, like the neo-Malthusians of the 1830s, is concerned with the alternating phases of economic growth and stagnation delineated by long-term population trends, but has been even more strongly influenced by the *Annales* school of Fernand Braudel. Despite the necessarily technical character of Ladurie's analysis, the *Annales* conviction that economic trends are not fully explicable without reference to

The offstage social machinery

Steven Englund

STANFORD ELWITT
The Third Republic Defended: Bourgeois reform in France 1880-1914
304pp, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, £23.40,
08071 0291

Stanford Elwitt's last book, *The Making of the Third Republic*, left us in 1984, with the régime established and "republicanized". His new one collects us from where we stood, but takes us in a quite different direction. If, in its "youth", the Third Republic fought the essentially political battle of "qui gouverne?", by early "adolescence", writes Elwitt, it was obliged to get aside partisan quarrels in order to cope with social conflict, the conflict that demographic and depression had brought relentlessly to the fore.

In short, the "Social Question" rudely intruded itself with the great crisis of the 1880s and thereafter preoccupied not simply the régime and the parties, but the nation as a whole. And with it came a different sort of politics from what we generally read about; to grasp the history of *fin-de-siècle* France, Elwitt argues, we must enquire into how the élites

met the continuing challenge posed by labour unions, strikes, revolutionary socialism and class struggle. To do this, the focus must shift from the familiar "theater of high politics" in "offstage, in the precincts of bourgeois political associations, where industrialists, managers, politicians, and politicized intellectuals gathered and drew up plans for France's 'social machinery'".

The arena on to which Elwitt shines a searchlight is quite as neglected and important as he makes out. It is not that we don't often encounter a familiar cast of characters (Buisson, Bourgeois, Say, etc), but rather that they are no longer confined to their roles as deputies and ministers. We see them, and many more, in their no less significant roles as social engineers and sociologists, as moral educators, paternalist reformers and solidarists. We meet them on corporate boards or in front offices, but mostly we meet them in the myriad parallel organizations that they spawned: le Musée Social, le Cercle Franklin, l'Association philotechnique, la Ligue nationale de la prévoyance, la Société d'économie sociale, et al.

The watch-words, almost the talismans, were "reform" and "social peace", but the reality remained the protection of corporate authority (against government as well as labour's encroachments).

There is only one serious flaw in the book (though some readers will be put off by Elwitt's irritating, if inconsequential, sarcasm when treating his élites). The study ones out for systematic attention to be paid to the crucial and

simply for money; and the *nouveaux riches* invariably rose to the bait. The office of *secrétaire du roi* was a short cut to noble status because it secured immediate ennoblement for the purchaser, whereas other venal offices conferred nobility only after the passage of two or three generations.

As this book reveals, however, of the 2,050 purchasers of the 300 or so offices of *secrétaire du roi* in the period 1672-1789, 404 were already noble or on the way to becoming so. Of these, 320 were using the office as a means of accelerating or completing their own move towards noble status. Why then did the eighty-four others, who were already noble, purchase or retain these offices? The explanations given here — that they had inherited them, or were holding on to them for sentimental reasons, or because they remained an investment, or again because such offices were an added proof of genuine nobility or just testimonials of good character — fail to carry conviction when the list includes a prince of the House of Lorraine, a legitimized Bourbon and a court grandee like the Duc d'Anjou.

The 2,050 *secrétaires du roi* are broken down

the collective *mentalités* of the rural world comes through strongly in *The French Peasantry*, as it did in Ladurie's pioneering *Les paysans de Languedoc* (1966), which provided the conceptual framework and some of the empirical data for the later study. His observations here on the conservative, provincial self-sufficiency of the rustic Norman squire, and the Catholic austerity of a largely illiterate peasantry, as factors in economic blockage are entertaining and suggestive, if not always conclusive. Similarly, his sympathetic treatment of peasant rebellion brings home the fact that, despite their lack of institutional power, rural communities retained a powerful sense of solidarity which prevented their complete obliteration by the forces of modernization.

More surprising, particularly in view of Ladurie's rejection of his youthful Marxism, is the extent to which he utilizes Marxist categories in explaining France's long and winding road to capitalism. Although he views the crisis of the late Middle Ages primarily from a demographic/Malthusian perspective, he brings in the idea of a seismic crisis that does not seem far removed from the Marxist "crisis of feudalism". Moreover, Ladurie says the demographic restoration of the Renaissance did not imply the simple completion of a Malthusian cycle, for the rejuvenated population was part of a much changed post-feudal world. Seigneurs were transformed into landowners, feudal perquisites gave way to modern ground rents, while an increasingly impoverished

peasantry, clinging desperately to inadequate parcels of land, assumed the features of an embryonic proletariat, particularly in the grain-growing regions of the north. Here the large estates carved out by the urban upper classes became the foundations of a commercialized, market-oriented agriculture, utilizing wage labour under the direction of the seigneurial farmers.

The central question posed by Ladurie's striking synthesis of these disparate yet complementary approaches is why, given the emergence of capitalist structures as France recovered from the ravages of the fourteenth century, the economy entered such a prolonged period of stagnation, during which agricultural yields barely improved on those of the Middle Ages. Curiously, Ladurie fails to answer his own question in the systematic manner that his analysis demands. Scattered through the book are references to the lack of technological innovation, the insufficiency of manure and fertilizer, the force of conservative *mentalités*, the limitations imposed by intensive wine growing, poor communications, low levels of literacy and so on, together with some passing comments on the happier combination of circumstances that stimulated an agricultural revolution in the Netherlands and England. But there is no convincing explanation for the fact that France's literate and quite knowledgeable embryonic agricultural capitalists displayed little interest in revolutionizing methods of production. It was certainly not the case that

they were insufficiently acquisitive, as one school of thought has long held, or, as has been suggested in recent years, that the semi-proletarianized peasantry constituted an insuperable obstacle. The inescapable conclusion — and one Ladurie does not quite reach — is that large landowners, either because they found their landed revenues adequate and/or because they were sufficiently well endowed with offices and *rentier* income, were under no great pressure to become improving landlords in the style of their English counterparts. Ladurie's failure to grasp this point derives from his insistence that feudal revenues were of limited significance, whereas in fact they gave the landlord a cushion without which the pressure on profit margins would have compelled them to improve their estates. It is strange that he does not seize on the inherently contradictory nature of the process whereby feudal seigneurs became capitalist landowners, for this helps to explain not only why that transition was so long and painful but also to account for the economic stagnation of the seventeenth century.

What Ladurie does succeed in showing, with great clarity and vivid detail is the way in which the French peasantry lost its economic dynamism. Not only did this preclude the possibility of a more radical capitalist development, generated by an emergent class of yeoman or kulaks within the ranks of the peasantry itself, but it also impeded the creation of a buoyant home market, essential if the seigneurs were to achieve their capitalist destiny.

extremely (because intentionally) subtle connections between, on the one hand, the "social engineers" in their "unpolitical" leagues, and, on the other, the "theater of high politics". Elwitt constantly supposes and alludes to such relationships, but because he has based his book too exclusively on published texts and speeches, he fails to demonstrate them (as does, for example, Charles Maier in his masterly *Reconstructing Bourgeois Europe*).

Worse, he sometimes overlooks them, with disastrous results. For example, he refers to "the lunatic right" (Maurras, Dérouté, Barrès, Drumont, etc) and alleges that they failed to "deal directly with the social question". The most casual acquaintance with the contents of police reports, or even of the now large secondary literature (which Elwitt openly disdains), would have revealed the nationalists' extraordinary and precocious sensitivity to the social question (not to mention their close connections with the men whom he writes about — and the men in power, as well). Hence the seriousness of the error of dismissing the far right as "lunatic".

In sum, if this book were a third longer, and if its energy and perspicacity were matched by close archival research, the result might have been a watershed in Third Republic historiography.

tries for each of the 2,050 *secrétaires* arranged alphabetically. The basic information comes mainly from the files containing the certificates of goul conduct which the recipients of the offices were required to produce, a reliable source. Favre-Lejeune is in trouble when she endeavours to complete these entries with details of the ancestry or descent of the recipients. Using secondary material, opting for one hint source or another, she commits some howlers. Thus, in one instance, she merges the family of Laborde the court banker with that of Jean-Benjamin de Laborde the farmer-general and musicologist, with devastating effect.

Despite such faults, the work is a useful compilation and an essential addition to the already impressive corpus of biographical dictionaries covering the "Establishment" of the ancien régime pioneered by François Bluche, Michel Antoine and others. Scholars of the period will rummage in it eagerly for details on those *illustres* *homines* who keep cropping up in their research. It is therefore a pity that this vast store of information has been presented in an ill-digested form and is by no means free from error.

The *Dictionnaire biographique* consists of eight

into socio-professional groupings: 6.29 per cent were in the army (with a further 2.68 per cent in military administration), 33.65 per cent from the *robe* or magistrature, 31.02 per cent were financiers, 14.58 per cent in trade and 11.75 per cent miscellaneous. These statistics confirm that the majority of purchasers came from the rich, upwardly mobile sections of society. The *secrétaires* came from 416 towns. More came from Normandy, Champagne, Flanders, the vicinity of Paris, Lyons and Nantes, than from Alsace, Lorraine, Franche-Comté, Brittany and Guyenne-Gascogne, where the major families were already noble or preferred to seek ennoblement through local office-holding. Half of them came from towns of more than 2,000 inhabitants, 673 came from Paris and 653 moved to Paris. *Secrétaires du roi* with gulf activities in the coastal regions tended to resist the lure of the capital. There would be wise to stop quoting Christine Favre-Lejeune's figures, for some of them do not add up exactly and differ from those given by François Furet and Guy Chausson-Nogaret in their introduction.

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What Elwitt has done in this important book is to analyse the crystallization, under pressure of class anxiety, of a new, enlightened consensus of social defence, which drew its ideas and much of its strength from extra-parliamentary institutions. Avowedly "unpolitical" (indeed "scientific") in origin, these latter rigidly subordinated traditional partisan and religious differences. For their efforts, they reaped a rich political harvest by the turn of the century. Under governments variously headed by Waldeck, Clemenceau, Briand (or whomsoever), this anxious cartel preserved "bourgeois hegemony", if not social peace, in the very teeth of revolutionary socialism and syndicalism.

The strength of Elwitt's study is to demonstrate with far more evidence and acumen than anyone has before the class-interested reality behind a wide range of supposedly scientific, national, integrationist ideas, institutions and reform proposals (and measures). "There was nothing philosophical about solidarism", he quite correctly points out, "it was purely political."

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Putting the place to rights

G. H. Martin

R. A. SKELTON and P. H. A. HARVEY
Local Maps and Plans from Medieval England
374pp. Oxford University Press. £23.5.
0198223633

The medieval artist's perception of the everyday world is one of the most characteristic and lasting features of his richly endowed but enigmatic culture. The intensely stylized quality of medieval painting, informed by symbolism that we can only imperfectly retrieve, seems to set the whole era apart. If there was a sense of perspective, it sat lightly on those who practised the graphic arts, yet the cathedrals stand to show how confidently their builders gauged space and drew templates, and much naturalistic sculpture survives to show flowers and leaves lovingly and exactly observed. In so idiosyncratic a time, it is not surprising that maps should be intricate rather than prosaic, and that spatial relationships should be presented in some strange guises. The best-known examples, the *mappe mundi*, are more celebrated for their imagery than for topographical reliability. They are also comparative rarities, and imply that they always were.

Appearances can be misleading, however, as in the *mappe mundi* itself, or in the Gough Map, which lies outside the bounds of *Local Maps and Plans from Medieval England*, but which within its amoeba-like outlines contains some precise observation. There are other grounds for supposing that the notion of mapping was not altogether strange to the medieval mind. When this volume was projected in 1967 it was to take account of what seemed to be a limited group of documents. It was first proposed by P. D. A. Harvey and recently supported by R. A. Skelton. Before Skelton's untimely death in 1970 the original list of fifteen maps had grown substantially, and the completed work contains thirty maps and plans drawn before 1500, with a note of another four which were discovered too late to be incorporated. Three more of the learned contributors died before the present striking (and formidably expensive) volume emerged from the press.

The thirty maps discussed, each one illustrated in monochrome, and also in colour when the condition of a coloured original permits it, range in time from the middle years of the twelfth to the end of the fifteenth century. Each is carefully described, its manuscript tradition and subsequent bibliography noted, and its topography and purpose elucidated by one (or in one instance, two) of the twenty principal contributors. Two appendices list medieval diagrams which are not topographical, and four maps previously attributed to the Middle Ages which are now accepted as dating from the sixteenth century. The substantial size of the volume, 200 x 350 mm, allows the maps to be handsomely reproduced, although the largest specimens, such as the plans of Canterbury Cathedral priory and the London Charterhouse, are still well below their actual size. Indeed, the dimensions of the page, which accommodate a line of print so long as to tax the eye, and that might have been as serviceably, though less elegantly, set in double column, still impose some reduction on almost

half the maps, including some of, though not all, the most detailed and striking. The general standard of the volume's design and typography is nevertheless high, and the scholarship all that one would expect of its general editor.

Professor Harvey has given, or appears to have given, his contributors a free hand, and as they included Don David Knowles on the Charterhouse and William Urry on the topography of Canterbury, it was eminently reasonable to do so. Besides describing three of the maps himself, he has written the four introductory essays on the traditions and accomplishments of medieval map-making, and discusses the present English evidence in a European context.

In doing that, he is careful not to be carried away by his material. In sum the English achievement is not impressive: there is no clear development of technique between the earliest and latest specimens, and Harvey sees no connection between surveying and map-making such as declared itself in the notable cartographic advances of the sixteenth century. Yet we now have twice as many local maps as we were aware of twenty years ago, and while there may not be many more to discover in Britain, it is certain that France has, and likely that Spain and Portugal will have, a good deal more to offer. A better-defined corpus of material from the Continent could make a vital difference to evaluating what has survived in England.

In the meantime, however, there is material for reflection. Only a few of the surviving English maps can be dated precisely, but even within the broadest limits of uncertainty two-thirds of the present number fall after 1401. Whether or not there had been any refinement of technique, there were more maps about at the end of the Middle Ages than there had been earlier. They are also more likely to have not placed at the top of the map as time goes on, which suggests some familiarity with the magnetic compass. Recent discoveries suggest that the portolan chart had an earlier currency in England than we have supposed, and the evidence from local maps is that its influence was not confined to navigation.

The geographical distribution of the maps is striking. Harvey points out that seven of the thirty came from the Fenland, and there he is able to discern something like a tradition of map-making. Of the others, the outliers are in the south-west (Exeter two and Dartmoor one) and Durham (three); and then come maps from South Yorkshire (Fenland again, south of Goole), Tanworth-in-Arden and Sherwood Forest in the Midlands, a cluster in and around London (six) and Canterbury (four), and a solitary building plan from Winchester. There were certainly other building plans, but, surprising if there were no maps anywhere else — if there were never any from Chester or Furness, for example, or Bury St Edmunds and Norwich, or Glastonbury.

The styles and purposes of the survivors are also striking. The largest broad group is concerned with water supplies, mill-streams, fisheries and riparian rights. A mill-course can sustain a substantial burden of interests, and so of conflicting claims. It also lends itself to graphical representation. At the time it was often more distinctive than a road, and its line

readily determines the order in which features are to be shown. A substantial cluster of maps, however, depict wider tracts of country, including Sherwood Forest, Dartmoor and Incesmoor, which called for some organizational skill; the depiction of Incesmoor, which Maurice Beresford argues persuasively for dating to the reign of Henry IV rather than Henry VII, is marked by some elegant draughtsmanship. But all are either quite crudely conceived or stylized in a fashion that overrules what we expect of a map.

The triumph of convention is less surprising in such specimens as the well-known vista of Bristol from Rickard's Calendar, or that of Boarstall, which were presumably designed to gratify in the one instance civic, and in the other family, pride. At Tanworth-in-Arden, at the very end of the period, we have sketch plans that display an element of proprietorial curiosity and technical enthusiasm; while at Barholm and Stowe, Lincolnshire, a crudely drawn but "by no means ineptly-plotted" map has been added to a historical rignarole about Barholm and Shillingthorpe which

serves no perceptible purpose, and yet clearly been the subject of much deliberation. Against it, the drawings of a message-plots at Clenchwarton, Norfolk, tented in Exeter, or the parcels of land at Shoulton, Norfolk, which are evidently quite closely related to a field survey, are businesslike and straightforward.

First and last, however, these maps show style, and patterns of perception, that are far removed from our own. Even to the most exacting, they yield their information only slowly and cautiously. Those which are most concerned with practical matters, like the early fourteenth-century map of the springs and coasts at Wormley, Hertfordshire or the Chaucer house plan, express the practicality of a supervising clerk rather than of the plumber or engineer. Yet without exception they are much more to offer than any of their counterparts. They present a view of a world as demonstrably like our own, but which has been assessed in a manner thoroughly and categorically different. We are the better informed about it by this remarkable work.

Insular illuminations

Christopher de Hamel

LUCY FREEMAN SANDLER
Gothic Manuscripts, 1285-1385
Two volumes, 301pp and 450 illustrations.
Harvey Miller/Oxford University Press. £70.
0199210373

Lucy Freeman Sandler's *Gothic Manuscripts 1285-1385* is the fifth of six volumes in the series *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*. The whole multi-volume project, under the general editorship of J. J. G. Alexander, is planned to provide an illustrated corpus of all the most important manuscripts illuminated in Britain from the beginnings of book painting in the seventh century to the flamboyant texts of the Renaissance. The actual manuscripts are now scattered in all parts of the world. The Survey will represent them together in chronological order with illustrations and descriptions and with up-to-date commentaries and bibliographies. The number of major English medieval paintings on and around the pages of books is vast (and far more books survive from the Middle Ages than artefacts of any other kind), but it is not infinite. The *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* is a first giant step towards writing a history of the first millennium of British pictorial art, and this is a unique project among the countries of Europe.

Lucy Sandler describes 158 manuscripts. She explains that this takes us from the Alphonso Psalter, begun to commemorate the impending marriage of a younger son of Edward I, to the Missal made at Westminster Abbey at the expense of Abbot Nicholas Lyllyngton exactly a hundred years later. The Psalter passed down through the Bohun family (we hear a lot about them here) and through a succession of collectors, including Archbishop Tenison (1636-1715), was sold at Sotheby's twice and is now in the British Library. The Missal has never left the Abbey where it was made and where thirteen dozen sheets of vellum were ordered for its manufacture in 1383-4.

It is striking that the texts in this group of manuscripts are strangely old-fashioned. The finest and most famous books are Psalters and Missals and devotional works. More than two-thirds of all the best English manuscripts of the period, this catalogue reveals, are Bibles or service-books: it is quite different from the practice on the Continent, where at this time they were illustrating Dante and the *Roman de la Rose*, Trojans and Arthurian romances, histories, *Bibles Morales*, medical and universal texts, and encyclopaedias. There is not one Middle English manuscript here, and the only literary text is a French copy of Laetolot, included because two miniature were afterwards overpainted in England.

The clues that emerge about the first owners of English manuscripts, or (rarely still) about their scribes and artists, suggest a much closer relationship with the Church than one would have expected as late as the fourteenth century. About a fifth of the manuscripts listed

here are known to have belonged to Benedictine abbots; there are many Augustinian as well as some Cistercian books, and also those from Irish churches. Here are the great Psalters in the Abbeys of Peterborough, Ramsey and Bromholm. One scribe whose name survives was a canon of St Paul's Cathedral in London. Other scribes, though apparently laymen, are recorded as lodging in the Priory of St Trinity, Aldgate, and in the royal Abbey of Westminster and St Albans. The illuminator on the payroll of Humphrey de Bohun (who died in 1361) was an Augustinian canon, and was his apprentice, Henry Hood, Brother Henry was in Rome on ecclesiastical business in 1390. It may be this comparative unprofessionalism of English manuscript-makers that accounts for a notable lack of uniformity among their books. None of the manuscripts described here can be linked with great accuracy to specific workshops. Professor Sandler, unlike many historians of medieval art, is experienced enough to be very cautious of making unsubstantiated attributions. She stresses the risk of confusing the intended destination of a manuscript with its place of manufacture. With courtesy and carefully phrased authority, she calls into question many published localizations and, in associating some books with London or Norwich, asks whether we really know enough of other cities such as York or Bristol. Oxford and Salisbury were doubtless important too. Certain stylistic details of manuscripts, such as those resembling the Queen Mary Psalter or the *Walter of Meete* books, hint at a few centres of production, perhaps in London; but the overall impression left from reading this catalogue is of widely disparate and widely eccentric manuscripts home-made under the auspices of rural monks or of minor provincial aristocrats.

This eccentricity is a great part of the fun of fourteenth-century English art. The manuscripts here are filled with multicoloured motifs, lion-pawed owls, courtly wild-woman grotesques with two faces or with heads like drums or jugs, monkeys aping humans, birds, rabbits and probably more bare bottoms than in any books until the 1890s. Lucy Sandler has managed to convey in a few words exact images of even some of the most bizarre mythical freaks. Her descriptions are clear, simple and vivid. She avoids technical jargon with such thoroughness that her glossary even includes the word "squiggle". The author has really looked at these manuscripts and clearly loves them. Students will have seen her in the reading rooms of the British Library and elsewhere sitting far back in her chair, gazing and gazing at illumination. She refers here to "hidden delights which emerge into sight only after long perusal". She began this catalogue in 1976 and knows each manuscript like an old friend. It is a pity that it is sometimes impertinent to inquire too closely into the origins of intimate connections: in this book we are introduced to 158 of Professor Sandler's.

In the line of the Prophet

Fred M. Donner

PATRICIA CRONE AND MARTIN HINDS
God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam
315pp. Cambridge University Press. £22.50.
0521321859

One of the joys, as well as one of the pitfalls, of studying the origins of Islam lies in the dearth of only documentary sources that tell us what happened. On the one hand, it is all too easy, in their absence, to be misled by what later Islamic tradition says about its own origins, or by the accounts of "outside" (that is non-Islamic) sources, such as Christian Byzantine or Syrian chroniclers, whose biases and motivations in reporting the rise of Islam we do not yet fully understand. On the other hand, this very lack of evidence sometimes offers the historian a luxury that his colleagues specializing in better-documented historical periods cannot enjoy — virtual freedom from decisive refutation. The biggest challenge facing him, then, is to deal creatively, yet responsibly, with the limited evidence available. He must somehow avoid being buried under a mass of traditional interpretations, without merely escaping to castles in the air. The authors of *God's Caliph* have done a good job of keeping their feet on the ground, while looking about in search of new vistas.

Their main thesis is a very simple one. They argue that "the early caliphate was conceived along the lines familiar from Shi'ite Islam". That is, the early caliphs were considered to be not only political rulers of the Islamic community, as later Sunni theory claimed, but also the fount of the community's law and the guides necessary for the individual Muslim, and for the Islamic community at large, to attain salvation in the afterlife. The early caliphs, in other words, claimed to be both rulers and legislators, just like the Shi'ite Imams. Like them, the Umayyad caliphs — in the authors' view — claimed that the imam/caliph was the functional equivalent of a prophet. Indeed, the Shi'ite conception, rather than being the innovation it is generally held to be, is nothing less than a vestige of the original conception of the caliphate held by all Muslims. Most Western scholars have adopted the later Sunni interpretation that the early caliphs were political rulers only, so Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds' interpretation, if sustained, will serve as an important corrective.

Having first stated their case, the authors proceed to document it, and to discuss why and how the original conception of the caliphate was superseded by the victorious Sunni theory (except, of course, in Shi'ite circles). The evidence of coins and Umayyad poetry, which they consider to be more reliable than the often redacted texts of chronicles, weighs especially heavily; through it, they try to show that the Umayyads, starting with 'Uthman (644-56) and continuing to the end of the dynasty in 750, almost all claimed to be "God's caliph" (*Khalifat Allah*) — a phrase glossed by later Sunni writers as an abbreviation of the awkwardly "successor [of the Apostle] of God" (*Khalifat rasul Allah*), but in fact simply a statement of the Umayyads' belief that they were, in fact, God's agents, or deputies, on earth, and not simply the Prophet's political successors. This conception was at work in the Umayyads' issuance of edicts and in their activities as judges, not only in matters of taxation and state administration, but in all aspects of what comes to be known as Islamic law (*shari'at*), whether essentially religious or secular in its import. The Umayyads also claimed to have superhuman (that is, God-guided) insight in matters of legal judgment.

In this context the authors also discuss the slow emergence of the Islamic concept of *shari'at*. Later Sunni thinkers would come to understand this term as a reference to the "summa of the Prophet (Muhammad)", and link it to very specific practices as one of the main legitimizing principles of Sunni legal theory. Crone and Hinds argue, however, that in the Umayyad period the term meant merely "generally accepted practice" (or perhaps simply "virtue", especially as displayed by prophets and caliphs), an idea at this time still devoid of any specific legal content. When linked with appeals to "the book" (viz. the Qur'an) it seems to have been used by rebels

as a kind of general appeal for support against perceived oppression, much as twentieth-century public figures voice vague catchwords such as "progress", "democracy", or "freedom" when they decide to enter the political fray.

The later sections of the book describe how the Abbasids attempted, unsuccessfully, to continue this Umayyad conception of the caliphate, and how they eventually succumbed to the Sunni theory, generated among the *ulama* (those people learned in religious law), which not surprisingly placed the authority to interpret Qur'an and *sunna* — in effect, to legislate — squarely in the hands of the *ulama* themselves.

There is much to recommend serious consideration of the views in this book. The authors relate the religio-political conceptions of different Islamic groups (Shi'is, Sunnis, Kharijites, etc.) in a way that, at first sight, appears more plausible than the "traditional" viewpoint, which forces us to assume that the "sectarian" conceptions are somehow derivative from the "orthodox" Sunni conception,

have to ask what this formulation really meant to them. Perhaps I am just stubborn, but I find it hard to believe that when al-Tahtawi called the Khedive of Egypt "caliph of God in this earth", he meant to imply that the Khedive, as "God's deputy", was imbued with full religious authority — authority to make new laws on his own, perhaps overturning in the process precedents traced back to the Prophet Muhammad or the Qur'an; authority to act without reference to any other group, particularly the *ulama*; authority upon which the salvation of the Islamic community ultimately depended, in the manner of a Shi'ite imam. It is hard to believe, also, that the *ulama* of Egypt understood al-Tahtawi's use of the term in this way, and simply acquiesced in the Khedive's role as God-guided imam — a role which, of course, would have deprived the *ulama* themselves of any real position of influence, theologically or socially. It seems more likely that al-Tahtawi (and others who use the term "caliph of God" at so late a date) meant to imply by it something much more limited: that the Khedive was called God's deputy (or, perhaps, "lieutenant").

Another possible difficulty with the thesis presented in *God's Caliph* is raised by the frequent invocation of the principle of *shari'at*, or consultative council, in early Islamic political dialogue, for it is an idea which fits ill with the view advanced here that all early Muslims considered the caliph to be God's deputy with full legislative authority. We see the *shari'at* concept invoked even in one of the documents that Crone and Hinds so thoughtfully translate for us as evidence, the letter of Yazid III; in this case, Yazid relates how his followers confronted "the enemy of God", Yazid's rival al-Walid, and "called upon him to set up a *shari'at* in which the Muslims might consider for themselves whom to invest [with authority] from those they agreed on". This does not sound, however, like the talk of one who truly believed that he held the full, divinely granted authority to rule the community; if he did believe so, why would he entrust such major decisions to the whim of a *shari'at* composed of ordinary Muslims? Similarly, if during the first civil war both 'Ali and Mu'awiya (or either one of them) had subscribed to the view that they held rightful, God-given authority fully in their own hands, why did they both agree to let the dispute between them be arbitrated by their representatives, whose judgment could, after all, only be human?

In sum, the authors of *God's Caliph* may have overstated the conceptual uniformity within the early Islamic community on matters of religious authority and legitimacy. This is rather ironic in view of the fact that one of the authors (Crone), in an earlier book published with Michael Cook (*Hijabism*, 1977), stressed precisely the conceptual fluidity and ideological diversity in early Islam, a diversity which *God's Caliph* seems to deny. The authors have, I believe, rightly argued that the imam-type conception of the caliphate is an old one; but they have wrongly concluded that the "constitutional" or eventual Sunni argument, according to which the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad are the ultimate sources of law, could not therefore also be old, and must consequently be derivative. In fact, it seems to me more reasonable to assume that both conceptions (along, perhaps, with a number of others) are equally old, and that the confusion of early Islamic political theory, and the determined maintenance of both opinions among different groups over fourteen centuries, reflect the uncertainty and diversity of opinion among the earliest Muslims as they struggled — in word and in deed — to establish the merits of their contending theories.

The preceding ruminations should not mislead the reader into dismissing this book; rather, they should be recognized as mere quibbles — and largely tentative ones at that — that hardly affect its substantive contribution. Crone and Hinds have provided us with the best-documented, most penetrating and most thought-provoking study of early Islamic religio-political concepts to date. Its abundant references will long be mined by others, and its fertile and imaginative, but generally sensible, insights will probably provide the framework for discussion on this theme for years to come. In short, it is a scholarly contribution of major importance.

The book is also impressive for the range of evidence assembled to support its arguments — evidence not only from the earliest Islamic centuries, but also that some of these concepts survived, or that the vocabulary associated with them continued to circulate, until a much later date. The authors show, for example, how the phrase "caliph (deputy) of God" is attested not only for the Umayyads and Abbasids, but also for the Saljuqs (eleventh to thirteenth centuries), the Ottomans (thirteenth to twentieth centuries), the Khedives of nineteenth-century Egypt, and even for former president Numejri of the Sudan, as late as 1984.

But there is a problem here. If later orthodox Muslims from the Saljuqs to Numejri, who knew and subscribed to the Sunni version of things, could also use the "earlier" formulation with no apparent cognitive dissonance, we



Supporting arches of the mihrab of Hakan II in the Great Mosque, Cordoba. The photograph is reproduced from *Islamic Architecture* by John D. Hoag (1983pp, Faber & Faber, £12.95, 0571 146684).

From under Spanish seals

Angus Mackay

FRANCISCO J. HERNÁNDEZ (Editor)
Los Cartularios de Toledo: Catálogo documental
854pp. Madrid: Fundación Ramón Areces.
84 8542 30 2

The publication of this impressive and handsome volume marks the first stage of an important project, the *Monumenta Ecclesiae Tolitanae Historica*. Under the joint direction of the archivist of Toledo Cathedral, Dr Ramón González, and Dr Francisco J. Hernández, its objective is to publish all the medieval documents of the cathedral archives of Toledo (including those which were transferred to the National Archive in Madrid during the nineteenth century). Given that city's

distinction, as well as the fact that access to the archives in question has not always been easy, the publication of these documents, covering the years 1086-1495, will undoubtedly provide scholars with rich new sources of evidence on religious, political, social and cultural history. *Los Cartularios de Toledo* is a scrupulous work of scholarship covering royal, private and papal documents. Its value is greatly enhanced by excellent indexes, and the editor has provided each entry with exactly the right amount of textual apparatus.

It is fervently to be hoped that the international team of scholars which has been recruited to complete the task initiated under the generous aegis of the Fundación Ramón Areces will be enabled to continue a project from which our knowledge of medieval Europe as well as of Spain stands to benefit substantially.

Seasonal walks

Alexander Urquhart

CHRISTOPHER LLOYD
The Year at Great Dixter
192pp. Viking. £14.95.
0670180829

Christopher Lloyd, probably alone among living writers on gardening, has created a world which is unmistakably his own. At the centre of it is Great Dixter, the Lloyd family home, where he has been gardening, writing and receiving the public for more than thirty years. The house and garden have been a discernible source in most of Lloyd's previous books, but in *The Year at Great Dixter*, they have become the protagonists.

Dixter is a fifteenth-century Sussex manor house, magnificent of its kind. In his introduction Mr Lloyd sheds light on the diversity of influence which has led to the garden in its present form. In 1910 Nathaniel Lloyd, the author's father, bought the house and commissioned Lutyens to extend it and to lay out a

garden. His own horticultural interest seems to have focused almost entirely on clipping. He planted the hedges and topiary at Dixter and published a manual entitled *Garden Craftsmanship in Tree and Box*. After he died the wild pear tree which has since become a landmark was given its freedom and allowed to grow up through one of his hedges. During his lifetime, his son tells us, "he used to have it clipped every year so that it looked like a shaving brush at the end of each season". Lloyd's mother was a more fertile influence and the inspiration for the present garden. She introduced "wild gardening in rough grass", arguably Dixter's triumph. Mother and son worked together, not always harmoniously, until her death at the age of ninety-one.

The garden is in effect a number of inter-related smaller gardens in circular arrangement around the house. Lloyd hinges his commentary on a series of walks. The book has a chapter for each month of the year and, depending on the season, we are taken to visit one or other part of the garden.

My borders' abiding strengths in winter are in their

evergreens, in certain dried flower heads like hydrangeas, sedum and crocus, and in the ornamental grasses. . . . They turn to ethereal shades of warm brown and pierce straw as the sap gradually withdraws from stems and foliage. This only happens to the majority in December.

This sort of seasonal examination is an obvious approach but a good one, showing by example that there is no need for a garden to be without interest or to look threadbare at any time of the year. Of course no combination of words and pictures is a substitute for being there, but it is testimony to Lloyd's skill that he almost succeeds in providing one. He is the Izaak Walton of gardening, and the blend of homespun philosophy, anecdote and technical expertise which makes his writing so attractive serves him well here.

Other areas of the meadow are rich in snakeshead fritillaries, fritillaria meleagris, chequered purple or white or some intermediate shade. They love our heavy soil and keep increasing. Then there are proud spikes of early purples, *Orethys mascula*, above heavily spotted foliage. My mother and I originally introduced these from the woods, but they have taken over and now occur in many areas where we never

thought to plant them. This is the kind of outcome which conservationists cannot bear to contemplate (not in public anyway).

Characterization of a plantsman's garden through close examination of the place is to be avoided, but Lloyd sometimes succeeds to it. By June the pages bristle with botanical names and a good knowledge is necessary to get the best out of the tour. He is not wrong of the problem:

This book would become tedious if it paraded thousands of plants. . . . It has to be a "light" from recording", leaving the complete plan those who have the stamina to come and see themselves, not once but on repeated occasions.

A remarkable quality in Lloyd is his capacity to cater for those who do come and see (he has 20,000 each year), without destroying the feeling of intimacy which is so essential to a garden like Great Dixter. This is largely achieved by sacrificing, or at least seeming to sacrifice, his own privacy. But a garden is a public statement and Christopher Lloyd's success is a measure of his commitment.

Run for fun

Raymond Carr

ROGER MUMTING
Hedges and Hurdles: A social and economic history of National Hunt racing
172pp. J. A. Allen. £12.95.
0851314244

It is rare that the history of sport is the work of an enthusiast who is also a trained historian. Roger Mumting is both. He can thus set steeple-chasing against the economic and social background, not only of racing itself but of spectator sports in general, dependent as they are on the level of real wages and the amount of spare cash the spectators have to spend, or, as Victorian pruders were wont to argue, in waste, on the leisure industries. It is rare for a writer on sports to give tables derived from Hunt's *Regional Wage Variations in Britain, 1860-1913*, or Feinstein's *National Income and Expenditure*. Such expertise does not mean that the unwary reader will be marooned in quantitative history. This is a lively book.

It is mainly concerned with the regulation and rise to respectability of an unruly sport, in its early years popular with "betting men and roughs" and managed by stewards who turned a blind eye to illicit practices. While flat racing was patronized by kings and the nobility, the early steeplechases were organized by publicans; they brought into the field what Nimrod, the great sporting journalist of the 1830s, called "a bevy of scamps and vagabonds". Surtees, another opponent of steeple chasing, alleged that it was run by Jews (Surtees was notoriously antisemitic). Both thought it cruel to horses. Regulation came with the National Hunt Committee, established in 1866. Once amalgamated with the Jockey Club, National Hunt racing could at last approach flat racing in social acceptability. No longer is it, as it was described in the 1880s, "the recognized refuge of all outcasts, humane and equine, from the legitimate turf". Yet something of the old image lingers on: the *Sunday Times* has described Cheltenham as "one gigantic Anglo-fish booze-up".

Throughout, Mumting is excellent on the symbiotic relationship between gambling and racing. They cannot exist apart. The Victorians attacked gambling with as much vigour as they campaigned against prostitution. The campaign against off-the-course betting, as he demonstrates, was flawed by social prejudice

and a condescending paternalism. It was the increase of betting "especially amongst the working class" that alarmed the House of Lords Select Committee in 1902. Off-the-course street betting was penalized and gave a great deal of unnecessary work to the police; but the rich could bet on credit. The legalization of betting-shops in the 1960s provides proof that laws cannot defeat one of the most marked characteristics of the British people; a propensity to gamble which leads 35 per cent of the adult population to fill in football pools and 50 per cent to have a flutter on the Grand National and the Derby. But prejudice and puritanism died a lingering death; Lord Reith's BBC gave no starting-prices on radio till after the Second World War and the *Manchester Guardian* was the last paper to employ a racing correspondent.

Why has National Hunt racing retained its popularity in an urban society? There is, of course, the sheer excitement. Who can forget this year's Gold Cup, with that gallant outsider Cymbrandrian, jumping beautifully, overtaken on the home stretch by The Thinker? The great National Hunt horses, because they have a longer racing life than horses on the flat, become national heroes; Red Rum made more money as a "personality" than as a racehorse. Popular interest in racing has been stimulated by television, and because television lends to commercial sponsorship it has helped its finances though perhaps at the cost of diminishing attendances. Fearing this, Mrs Topham, then owner of Aintree, long refused television coverage and supplied her own radio commentators, with disastrous, if comic, results. Racing commentators are highly skilled professionals, and the increased professionalization and commercialization of spectator sports is a main and important theme of *Hedges and Hurdles*.

Roger Mumting's explanation for the continuing popularity of National Hunt racing is that rural romanticism leads businessmen to pose as country squires at the weekend. No longer an unregulated gallop across open country, steeplechasing, professionalized, regulated, commercialized as it now is, still retains a flavour of its origins in the hunting world of the English countryside. Neither owners nor all but the most successful professional jockeys but the most successful amateur riders, they make much out of National Hunt racing. They, like the spectators and amateur riders, are in it for the fun of the thing.

alin-powered immediacy of being - this patch of lichen, this white fingertip, these waves beneath - when all sense of separation is dissolved. More unusual elements in Native Stones include reflections on climbing with one's children - the conflicting urges to protect and expose them, the poignant moment when they finally leave one behind. He is fascinated, too, by the geology, the plant and the animal life of the crags, as well as their human history. Wordsworth and Coleridge were the first known craggers (for aesthetic rather than practical aims). For Coleridge, climbing presented "opportunities for ecstasy and dread and thrill". This approach lives on in modern extreme climbing, particularly American, which expresses itself in the language of drugs, Joyce, Peck District, Cornwall, Scotland and North Wales.

Craig argues that climbing is a simple extension of a baby's reflexive grip and the child's scrambling, that the urge to pull up higher is as natural as swimming or kicking a ball. But it is not that simple. Climbing involves fear, risk of injury or death. Many climbers will insist that climbing is not dangerous - though add that if it were not dangerous there would be no point in doing it. This psychological inconsistency lies close to the heart of climbing. Without some degree of fear and risk, there would be no opportunity for transcendence. It would be like climbing without gravity. In chemical terms the euphoria and well-being in risk sports comes from massive secretions of adrenalin, psychologically, it is in self-affirmation and self-overcoming. And in defeat there is humility, and self-knowledge, as when Craig truthfully records, "Honour and self-esteem can be like overbred beasts, turning sickly or vicious at the least setback".

The addition of climbing lies in an adre-

TLS

The Times Literary Supplement

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My sampling of the entries and references found an impressive standard of accuracy; the generous cross-referencing given makes browsing an almost mandatory pleasure, and it will indeed be a learned reader who does not find something he did not previously know on almost every page.

For a long time there has been a need to replace the useful but very outdated *Classical Dictionary of Lempière*. For factual and historical matters this was done years ago by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; and, with the publication of Pierre Grimal's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, Lempière can finally be relegated to the shelf reserved for books which have honourably outlived their usefulness."

J. H. C. Leach TLS 8th August 1986

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Hardy, not quite perennial

Brent Elliott

RAY DESMOND
A Celebration of Flowers: 200 years of "Curtis's Botanical Magazine"
208pp. Twickenham: Hamlyn/Kew: Royal Botanic Gardens. £15.
0160550753

Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* first appeared in February 1, 1787, priced at one shilling and containing three hand-coloured engravings of plants. Two centuries later, the magazine continues, though the title has been changed to *The Kew Magazine* and the illustrations are

now produced by photolithography. To honour the bicentenary of this longest-lived of botanical journals, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, its spiritual (and sometimes official) home for over 140 years, has published an official history by Ray Desmond, formerly Librarian at Kew. The volume is well presented and copiously illustrated, and while the publishing history of the magazine is the primary subject of the book, it also gathers together a mass of material on the history of botanic art, botanic gardens, and garden history.

As Desmond's book surveys the changes brought to the magazine by each successive editor, a recurrent theme emerges: the relative importance to be ascribed to native and exotic plants, to species and hybrids, to economic and

ornamental plants. The greatest of these editors was undoubtedly Sir William Hooker, whose short-lived *Companion to the Botanical Magazine* featured articles on subjects from botanical exploration to paper-making.

To those familiar with the *Bot. Mag.* as a sturdy series occupying some twenty feet of shelf space, it will come as a surprise to learn how close it came to extinction on several occasions during its history. William Curtis, its founder, was for ever inaugurating great abortive projects; under his son-in-law, Samuel Curtis, the journal began to suffer from the competition of its imitators, most notably Sydenham Edwards's *Botanical Register*; throughout the Victorian period its sales fluctuated; with the First World War it nearly

founded, only to be rescued by the Royal Horticultural Society in 1920. It was not until 1949 that economics finally resulted in the continuation of hand-colouring.

A Celebration of Flowers contains thirty plates, reproduced in colour, most of them from the original watercolours. Compared with the published plates may lead to long-overdue reassessment of the merits of Walter Hood Fitch (1817-1892), whose digital output (nearly 1,000 published drawings) has led most critics to regard his work as tedious and mechanical, and so to underrate him.

Side by side with the commercial history, the magazine runs the story of the plants that were illustrated in it, with chapters on greenhouses and gardens, orchidomania, methods of transporting plants, and twentieth-century plant hunting. These summaries are stimulating and the description of the slow growth of expertise in orchid culture is the best I have come across to date. This is a genuine contribution to that under-researched subject, the history of horticulture. The history of gardens, however, is another matter. The chapter on Victorian gardens is really an account of the plants that contained, so it comes as no surprise when the author claims that it is "impossible to define a typical Victorian garden": he has simply demonstrated the limits of the botanical approach to garden history.

This history effectively comes to an end in the early 1980s; the discontinuation of *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* and its replacement by *The Kew Magazine* are dealt with quickly in the last paragraph. The change was justified by sound commercial reasons; but since sound commercial reasons could have justified the closure of the magazine at virtually any point in the last 140 years, one cannot but regret that the old title was not continued until the bicentenary at least.

Swelling the number of natives

Ursula Buchan

JOHN FISHER
Wild Flowers in Danger
194pp. Gollancz. £12.95.
0575038934
JOHN CHAMBERS
Wild Flower Garden
144pp. Elm Tree. £10.95.
024112056X

In *Wild Flowers in Danger* John Fisher describes, often with an agreeably light touch, the history, characteristics and, in very guarded terms, the locations of one hundred plants whose survival is open to question. He is fascinated by the rare and endangered, as indeed most people are, and his delight in tracking them down is evident. It is for him an infinite privilege to see an unusual plant, particularly if he has had to go to great lengths to find it. But his tale is a dismal one, for man's egotistical impulse to possess what he sees is partly responsible for reducing our native flora by ten species in the last fifty years and condemning 300 of the remaining 1,500 to a precarious existence, always at risk of extinction.

Fisher explains in general terms where the well-behaved enthusiasts may discover these plants, pointing up the sterling work done by the nature conservation bodies in recording and protecting, and gives helpful information on photographing wild flowers. In contrast with many botanical books it is always readable (the description of *Rehbein* stretching flowers for its flora is particularly taking) and should encourage amateur botanists to pursue their interest at no cost to the native flora. The photographs, taken by the author, are excellent.

John Chambers's *Wild Flower Garden* is concerned about the fate of all wild flowers, rare and otherwise; not their preservation in the wild but rather the way gardeners can swell their numbers by growing them in the million acres of garden that exist in Britain. Many wild flowers flourish in garden settings

(masse) are extremely attractive both to humans and to wildlife. Like Fisher, Chambers mourns the losses already sustained but his concern is not with recording survivors but with promoting the interests of those that still remain. Like Fisher, he would never suggest taking seed from the wild - everything that he recommends can be found in packets. His credentials are impeccable; he is one of the pioneers in growing and marketing wild flowers from seed and has won medals for his flowering meadow exhibitions at horticultural shows.

Wild Flower Garden contains an illustrated guide to eighty wild flowers, including information on their history and habitats, as well as advice on how to grow them. Nearly all are well chosen, with the possible exceptions of lesser celandine and valerian, whose invasive nature I have had occasion to regret. He could,

perhaps, have spelled out more clearly, however, that not all native flowers are showy and that wild flowers are predominantly plants for spring and summer so that it is a mistake, in an excess of enthusiasm, to turn all exotic foreign plants, which have dominated for the past 150 years, out of the garden.

John Chambers does not hide from us the fact that to make and maintain a "mini" flowering meadow, plant up the margins of a pond or create a wild flower border means labour. This is not a lazy man's guide to gardening. Simply scattering seed on the ground does not work; so he provides a detailed explanation of how to establish wild flower areas. There is no pretence that very prolific plants such as foxgloves need not be controlled, nor that weeds need not be eliminated. Wild flower gardening is no short cut to an easy life, but it will improve its quality.

From landscape to villa

Penelope Hobhouse

CLARE BEST AND CAROLINE BOISSET
(Editors)
Leaves from the Garden: Two centuries of garden writing
415pp. Murray. £14.95.
0719543932

Leaves from the Garden covers nearly two centuries of garden thought, many of the contributors are household names among gardening cognoscenti, each of them designers of horticultural stature. Repton, Loudon, Shirley Hibberd, the inimitable William Robinson and E. A. Bowles are all included as well as some of our best modern garden writers, Beth Chatto, Arthur Hellyer, Robin Lane Fox, Christopher Lloyd and Graham Stuart Thomas, who bring what might have been a book with a nostalgic flavour into the 1980s. The book is useful as well as enjoyable; its well chosen names

particularly relevant to modest-sized modern gardens.

Sometimes, rarely, there is confusion. Repton opens the section on "The Formal Garden". It is good to be reminded that as he aged he redefined his philosophy; for many he remains associated with the wider landscape. But Plato 3, referred to twice later in the book, does not demonstrate a layout by Repton as the caption states. He made a plan with this title at Ashridge Park but it was for another area of the garden and it was never implemented. Wyattville's parterre was designed circa 1817; but the illustration shows an arched pattern introduced in the 1860s. We normally distinguish between the Rev William Gilpin, writer on the "picturesque", and his nephew, William Sawrey Gilpin, author of *Picturesque Hints on Landscape Gardening*, by including the latter's second name. Even in the acknowledgements at the back of the book this is not done. More regrettably, apart from choosing the themes and appropriate passages for inclusion, the editors

give few hints of historical context. Each passage might usefully have been linked with the next entry by editorial appraisal.

Yet, on the whole, this is a stimulating book. John Claudius Loudon's advice on "garden design" given in "A Modest Villa Garden" in 1850, remains relevant today, though his cities now have cleaner air. Lanning Roberts John Brooks bring the subject up to date. George Sitwell's *On the Making of Gardens* first published in 1909, is a minor masterpiece; a text that should be required reading for any aspiring landscape designer; the extract from here should encourage the reader to search the whole work (recently republished with introductions from his son and grandson). Clare Best and Caroline Boisset's choice of extracts for the section on "The Fragrant Garden" is particularly unusual and contains invaluable and detailed comments. In general, the editors' wide knowledge of sources and discriminating discernment of the useful and admirable

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